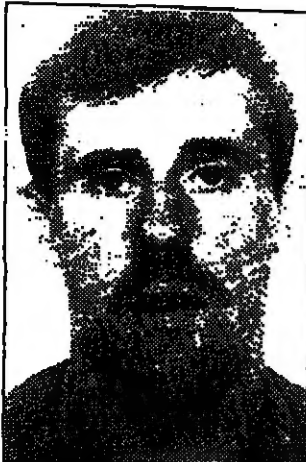


Police keep open mind over Sheehy's death



Sheehy: hunt for most-wanted man ends

By EDWARD GORMAN
IRISH AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PATRICK SHEEHY, for the past three years Britain's most wanted man linked to a string of IRA bombings on mainland Britain, was confirmed yesterday as having been found dead in a small town in south-west Ireland. Irish police said the body of a man they found lying in the street with a gunshot wound to the head in Nenagh, Co Tipperary in the early hours of Wednesday, was that of Sheehy.

He was 30, and a plasterer by trade but better known as a marksman and bombmaker from Ballysteen in Co Limerick. He was found soaked in blood near the town's post office. The gun which apparently ended his life lay next to

him. There was immediate controversy about the circumstances surrounding his death. Police reports on Wednesday initially suggested that Sheehy, then unidentified, had committed suicide and a crime was not suspected. Last night, however, police sources in Dublin said they were keeping an open mind.

"As it stands at the moment, he's dead. There's a gun, there's a post mortem and ballistics tests yet to be carried out, and there is nothing to suggest at this stage it wasn't suicide," the source said.

In a statement, the IRA said it was investigating the circumstances of the death. "The Irish Republican Army confirms with deep regret that the man found dead in Nenagh, Co

Tipperary on Wednesday, was one of our members, volunteer Patrick Sheehy," the statement said. "There are no further details available at the moment. The circumstances of his death are still being investigated."

There have been recent rumours that Sheehy was in dispute with senior IRA figures over his desire to continue in active service and their wish that he stand down because of widespread publicity about his activities in Britain had made him a liability to the organisation.

There were other reports that Sheehy, who was reportedly determined never to be taken alive, had grown disillusioned with the political strategy of the IRA and may have been planning to set up his own paramilitary cell outside the

agis of the organisation based in the Limerick area. Some accounts have suggested he had tried to telephone a senior IRA member only hours before he died to say he intended to take his life.

Sheehy has been wanted by Scotland Yard ever since the discovery of an IRA bomb factory at Clapham in southwest London in December 1988, where a huge quantity of weapons and explosives were found together with Sheehy's passport.

After his narrow escape there, police have regularly issued descriptions and even photographs of him and have linked him to IRA bomb attacks on army barracks in London and Shropshire, on military figures in Europe and England and with the

IRA plan to assassinate Tom King during his time as Northern Ireland secretary in 1987.

Sheehy was also a prime suspect in investigations into the IRA bombing of the Royal Marines School of Music at Walmers, near Deal, in Kent, in September 1989 in which 11 people died. Police described Sheehy and his colleagues who spearheaded IRA operations in Britain to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the army's intervention in Northern Ireland in August 1989 as armed and dangerous. Since the end of 1989, Sheehy appears to have gone to ground, probably in Ireland where he has been on the run from Irish police.

Report, page 3

Bush proposes direct talks with Iraq next week

By MARTIN FLETCHER in WASHINGTON AND ANDREW McEWEN

PRESIDENT Bush said yesterday he was ready for "one last attempt to go the extra mile for peace" and proposed direct talks with Iraq in Switzerland next week.

But as James Baker, the American Secretary of State, prepared to meet Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister, it was clear that the president was heading for a serious confrontation with Congress which would only encourage President Saddam Hussein to stand firm.

At a blunt White House meeting yesterday, House and Senate leaders insisted that Congress alone had the constitutional power to declare war, a position they said Mr Bush rejected.

On receiving the proposal, the Iraqi government went into emergency session to consider it and the White House said it wanted an answer from Baghdad by tomorrow. News of the planned

meeting brought a swift welcome from John Major and King Hussein of Jordan, who met for talks in Downing Street yesterday.

The announcement somewhat overshadowed, and appeared to be an attempt to head off, today's meeting of European Community foreign ministers, which is to consider a European initiative on the Gulf. An Arab attempt at peacemaking was also in progress last night, under the auspices of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, with President Mubarak of Egypt in attendance.

Congress, which was sworn in yesterday, cancelled its customary January recess. George Mitchell, the Senate majority leader, said there was a "substantive disagreement" between Congress and the White House over whether sanctions should be given more time to work. Backed by Tom Foley, the House Speaker, he said he doubted that Congress would pass a resolution giving the president "blank cheque" authority to commence military action, and predicted that it would debate a resolution of its own choosing, probably after next week's proposed meeting. This would almost certainly seek to limit the president's freedom of action.

Several congressional leaders said Mr Bush had given the impression of wanting to use force sooner, not later. Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont said: "I think for better or worse we've crossed the Rubicon. The question is not whether we're going to have a war, but when."

Mr Baker, speaking at the swearing-in ceremony for a new American ambassador to Kuwait, said he still hoped for a peaceful solution, but added: "The dark days of Iraq's cruel occupation are numbered."

Mr Bush's fresh offer of talks in Geneva on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday next week was discussed with Mr Major and President Mitterrand of France early yesterday morning and then delivered to Nizar Hamdoon, the Iraqi deputy foreign minister, by the American embassy in Baghdad. Iraq said the offer was being studied.

It came just 12 days before the United Nations deadline authorising force against Iraq and on the last of the 15 dates Mr Bush had originally proposed for Mr Baker to meet President Saddam in Baghdad. Iraq had offered only January 12 for such a meeting, a date the administration had rejected because it left too little time for a complete Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

Javier Pérez de Cuellar, the UN secretary-general, said yesterday he was working quietly behind the scenes to resolve the impasse in the Gulf, but did not reveal what he was doing.

President Bush said in a prepared statement that no further efforts would be made to send Mr Baker to Baghdad. Noting that the Iraqi leader had seen numerous other visiting politicians at short notice, he accused President Saddam of having been more interested in "manipulating my (original) offer than in a serious response".

By now proposing compromise dates, Mr Bush risks appearing weak in Iraqi eyes, but he emphasised that the purpose of direct talks remained simply to convince President Saddam that if he did not withdraw there would be a war. There would be "no negotiations, no compromises, no attempts at face-saving, and no rewards for aggression. What there will be if Iraq accepts this offer is, simply and importantly, an opportunity to resolve this crisis peacefully," he said.

Mr Baker was planning to go to Europe and the Gulf in any case next week for last-minute consultations with allies before the January 15 deadline, and the White House said that if the meeting with Mr Aziz took place he would hand over a letter from Mr Bush to President Saddam underlining American determination to see the UN resolutions implemented.

According to Senator Mitchell, the question of whether Mr Bush could go to war without congressional authority was "fully discussed and not resolved" at yesterday's White House meeting. Mr Bush said he would welcome a debate in which Congress debated without amendment a broad UN-style resolution authorising the use of force if Iraq had not left Kuwait by January 15.

At the same time, the Home Office announced the expulsions of 67 other Iraqis, mostly students, on the ground that their presence was "not conducive to the public good for reasons of national security". The Home Office would not say whether the expulsions were also linked to the Iraqi threats.

Whitehall sources said the government had strong evidence against the diplomats and a security guard but would not disclose details.

They said it was a coincidence that the move followed the voluntary departure from Baghdad last weekend of eight members of the British embassy. This was done because only 17 British residents remained in Iraq and 30 in Kuwait, leaving the diplomats with less work to do. However, it was also a precaution against exposing more diplomats than necessary to the risk of war.

Most of the Iraqi diplomats expelled worked in the embassy's press department in London, including those who had been helping British journalists to obtain visas to visit Baghdad. Some British journalists in the Iraqi capital have been advised to leave for their own security, mainly by American sources.

However a Whitehall source insisted that there were no ulterior motives in the choice of those expelled. Nor was it a tit-for-tat measure.

Continued on page 18, col 6



Looking for answers: King Hussein of Jordan with John Major and Douglas Hurd in Downing Street yesterday

Students and envoys expelled

By OUR DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

A THREAT by Baghdad to attack installations in Britain lay behind an announcement by the Foreign Office yesterday that eight members of the Iraqi embassy in London would be expelled with only 24 hours' notice.

At the same time, the Home Office announced the expulsions of 67 other Iraqis, mostly students, on the ground that their presence was "not conducive to the public good for reasons of national security". The Home Office would not say whether the expulsions were also linked to the Iraqi threats.

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Continued on page 18, col 6

Gorbachev wins accord to break budget deadlock

From MARY DEJEVSKY AND BRUCE CLARK in MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Gorbachev said last night that the central authorities and the republics had agreed the principles of forming the Soviet Union's budget for 1991.

Mr Gorbachev's announcement came after a four-hour meeting of the Council of the Federation, the policy-making body whose powers were increased as a result of last week's constitutional changes.

The president indicated, however, that the formation of a new government structure - the Cabinet of Ministers - would take longer than expected. The first appointments had been due early next week and the task of overseeing the reorganisation has been entrusted to the newly-appointed Vice-President, Gennadi Yanayev.

A clearly-satisfied Mr Gorbachev said that agreement had been reached on "the basic parameters of prices, taxes and social guarantees". Principles had also been found that constituted "a basis for forming a union budget and the budgets of the republics".

Last week the largest republic, the Russian Federation, threatened to cut its contribution to the 1991 central budget by more than 80 per cent compared with last year. The two largest Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, as well as the Ukraine, threatened to follow suit, leaving the Soviet exchequer with the possibility of meeting less than a fifth of its projected bills.

No details were available of the outline agreement or its duration. A resolution passed by the full Soviet parliament last week called for the conclusion of a "temporary economic agreement" for 1991 because of the discord. Mr Gorbachev suggested yesterday that, while many basics had been approved, areas of conflict remained.

Representatives of all 15 republics were said to have

attended yesterday's Council of the Federation meeting, including the Russian Federation leader, Boris Yeltsin, and representatives of all three Baltic States and Georgia.

A spokesman for the Baltic republic of Lithuania said that the republic's official representative in Moscow had attended the meeting but not participated. Lithuania insists that it will not participate in an overall Soviet economic budget agreement, but would be prepared to conclude a bilateral economic agreement with Moscow.

Israeli envoy, page 7

Study casts doubt on global-warming floods

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

THE belief that global warming will inevitably lead to rises in sea levels, flooding many low-lying areas of land, was thrown into doubt yesterday as a result of research at Edinburgh university.

Much of the future over global warming has been due to predictions of cities being flooded as oceans rise by up to a metre, fed by melting ice from the Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets.

Yesterday, David Sugden and Nick Hulston of the geog-

raphy department at Edinburgh university presented a different picture to the Institute of British Geographers conference being held at Sheffield.

Their studies suggest that the East Antarctic ice sheet may actually grow, rather than shrink, as the temperature warms up, and that the Greenland ice sheet, if it melts at all, will do so very slowly over thousands of years.

Sea level surprise, page 4

INSIDE

Tory dismay at Heseltine

Michael Heseltine has rebuffed invitations to hold private talks to discuss the government's review of the poll tax, according to Conservative local government leaders who fear any alternative to the community charge could prove equally unpopular. They are dismayed at the environment secretary's apparent insistence that contacts must be made through official meetings. Page 18

RIBA awards

The Royal Institute of British Architects makes three awards today for "world-class buildings". Page 5

Bound for Gulf

Surgeon Lieutenant Kathy Blaydes (above), the Royal Navy's first woman doctor to serve on board ship, set sail for the Gulf yesterday. Page 8

Rebels fight on

The main rebel group fighting to overthrow President Siad Barre of Somalia rejected calls for a ceasefire yesterday as prospects increased of a battle to the death. Page 9

Tsarist parallels

President Gorbachev's rule "resembles more and more the death throes of the Romanov dynasty", writes Janet Daley, whose weekly column starts today. Page 10

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SATURDAY

After now comes then

Remember post-modernism? A joke, some said: if modern is now, how can anything be post now? But post-modernism lives, as does the search for a definition. Bryan Appleyard begins an enlightening series SATURDAY REVIEW

Redford is as Redford was



Robert Redford on his new film and on the childhood beliefs that have stayed with him SATURDAY REVIEW

Winter in the garden

Francesca Greenoak with some tips on pruning, with shears, without tears SATURDAY REVIEW

If it flies it's an art gallery

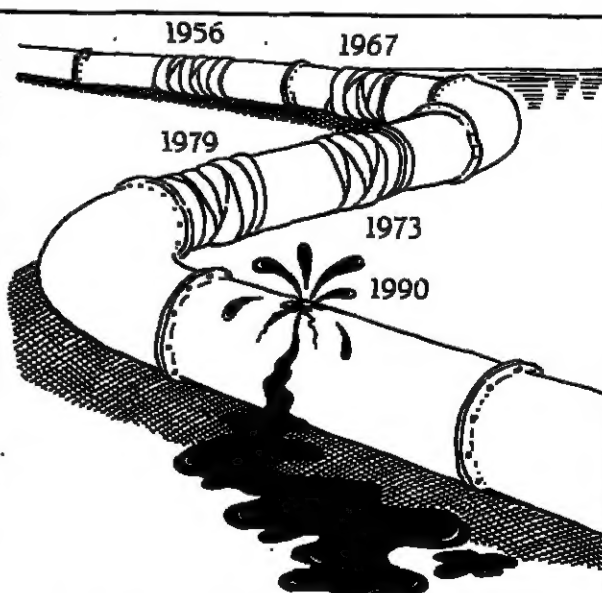
'If it's got wings, flies, and isn't a bird, then it has my undivided attention.' So says Roger Markman, who has opened a gallery devoted entirely to aeroplane art WEEKEND LIVING

Coe's names to look for



Sebastian Coe looks forward to the sporting year and names some of its likeliest big (or bigger) names SATURDAY SPORT

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uranium, comes from countries such as Canada, Australia and the USA.

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Curriculum 'a threat to reading of great books'

By DAVID TYTLER, EDUCATION EDITOR

ENGLISH literature's "great tradition" is under threat from the national curriculum designed to improve English standards in schools, according to a group of university lecturers. They believe students will be unable to cope with degree courses.

"Our fear is that the national curriculum is not promoting the reading of books and that students will emerge lacking the skills they require to read English at university," said Tom Healy, chairman of the Council for University English.

Dr Healy's concerns are shared by Martin Dodsworth, professor of English at Royal

Holloway and Bedford New College, London University, who told this week's *Times Higher Education Supplement*: "The consequences for literary education are very grave."

Professor Dodsworth, chairman of the English Association, has written to MPs and heads of English departments explaining that only 20 per cent of the curriculum for five to 16-year-olds will be literature-based. "Thinking about texts is a sophisticated literary operation," said Professor Dodsworth. "If schoolchildren are not taught to read great books, the consequence will be an erosion of our national culture."

Dr Healy, of Birkbeck College, London, said: "Children will be encouraged to analyse passages, but there will be no encouragement to read whole books. The literary content of the courses will be minimal. This is very worrying indeed."

Brian Cox, professor of English at Manchester University and chairman of the national curriculum working party on English, said that he believed current English courses would be phased out. "There will be much more emphasis on the craft of writing. The essay will no longer be seen as the only form. There will be variety: diaries, biographical writing, fiction. Creative writing will have to become a big part of university degree courses."

Insistence on A-levels 'restricting colleges'

GOVERNMENT insistence on retaining A-levels as the gold standard of British education is seriously limiting the number of young people who can enter higher education and training, Lady Blackstone, Master of Birkbeck College, London, said yesterday (David Tytler writes).

Britain's poor staying-on rates could only be improved by a radical rethink of higher education policy, she told the North of England Education Conference in Leeds. Universities and polytechnics should admit students with alternative qualifications, open up courses to part-timers and allow older adults to enrol without formal qualifications, Lady Blackstone said.

She said that many children put off by A-levels would be attracted by vocational courses that could lead to academic courses. Consideration should also be given to introducing two-year degree courses for all students; some would go into employment or professional training while others would continue with higher-level academic study leading to an honours degree.

Lady Blackstone, a Labour peer, said that one of the biggest increases should be in part-time studies for older people. "The pool of potential people capable of benefiting from return-to-study is without doubt greater than those who currently come forward," she said. "More must be done to encourage those adults who missed out earlier."

Universities and polytechnics should first abandon the idea that those potential students ought to have A-level qualifications, and should be prepared to accept some candidates who "on paper look marginal". Then, part-time courses should be held at times to suit older people who worked while studying.

Higher education would expand in the Nineties. However, the growth, unlike that in the Sixties and the Seventies, would not just be more of the same, but would draw on people from new sources.



Unwelcome extension: a silo built in the back garden of a house in March 1990 to store sand for a sandblasting business. It remained there for six months before the owner gave in to pressure from the council and residents

Planning cowboys face swift justice

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

BUILDERS and home-owners who flout planning regulations will be punished by magistrates within weeks of breaking the law, if a campaign by planners succeeds.

The District Planning Officers' Society, which represents planners at 334 district councils in England and Wales, said that buildings were being put up in ways that ruined the lives of neighbours and destroyed attractive areas of towns and villages. The perpetrators knew that it would be months or years before the law caught up with them.

Only in the most exceptional cases would they face court action and then the outcome was almost always a small fine. A few cases ended with the building being demolished.

The society's campaign will seek support among backbench MPs for an amendment to the new planning and compensation bill, which is

due to enter its committee stage in the Lords this month.

The amendment would give councils the power to take offenders to magistrates' courts within weeks of building work beginning. They could be heavily fined and ordered to stop work and demolish the building.

Michael Haslam, chief planning officer for South Norfolk district council, said: "We are not trying to land ordinary people in court. In most cases people who break the law because they do not realise they need permission are very amenable and we agree a solution."

"But there is a hard core of cowboys who do not care about anyone else and are just out to make money for themselves. They are the sort of people who are not bothered by a council notice telling them to stop."

John Sykes, chief planning officer of West Oxfordshire district council, said it could take up to six months before a council could issue an enforcement notice, the first formal step in preventing unauthorised building.

The process could then be stalled for a further 37 weeks if the person involved appealed

to the environment secretary. In one case, it had taken four years to deal with an illegal development.

"However much the administrative side is streamlined, it all takes far too long," he said. "While complaints stream in from parish councils and irate neighbours, the cumbersome procedures follow their course like a hippopotamus stuck in a quagmire."

He criticised government guidelines that advised councils to use enforcement only as a last resort, particularly where the offender was a small business. That led to councils being forced to offer offenders a chance to apply retrospectively to legitimise development that should never have taken place.

Mr Haslam added: "We cannot take legal action until the enforcement notice has been confirmed and that can take two years. Even when we get there, the courts are notoriously reluctant to impose large fines." His council received an average of 140 complaints a year, of which about 20 led to the issuing of enforcement notices and only two or three eventually ended in court. He said: "If we get this power it will be used sensibly."

Squeeze threatens survey of crime

By QUENTIN COWDRY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE Whitehall spending squeeze is threatening the most authoritative indicator of British crime patterns, a survey that suggests that police figures often greatly exaggerate how many offences are being committed.

Under a plan put to the Treasury late last year, the Home Office-funded British Crime Survey (BCS) would have doubled in size and been given a permanent budget allowing the audits to be done strictly every three years.

It emerged yesterday that Treasury ministers vetoed the plan, under which the cost of surveys would have tripled to £1.2 million. Because most of the Home Office's 1991-2 research budget is now committed, there is a risk that the next BCS may be postponed.

Leading university-based criminologists yesterday reacted to the news with horror, saying that the next survey, fieldwork for which was due to start in January 1992, was particularly important because it would permit correlations with 1991 census data. The BCS counts offences committed in the preceding year. Tony Bottoms, professor of criminology at Cambridge University, said: "It would be absolute madness if the survey is not done next year."

The BCS, based on interviews with householders, has received growing interest in recent years. The first three studies, conducted in 1982,

1984 and 1988, showed that police figures overstated crime levels, sometimes grossly so. The latest indicated that assaults causing wounding rose by 12 per cent between 1981 and 1987, not by the 40 per cent that police recorded.

Home Office civil servants were said yesterday to be seeking ways to juggle their 1991-2 budget to fund the survey.

Winds of 80mph for weekend

Winds of up to 80 miles an hour and heavy rain are expected this evening and tomorrow. The Meteorological Office predicted last night that Saturday's weather will be similar to that of Christmas day.

The winds are expected to hit hardest in northern England, particularly the North-West, and southern Scotland. "We are expecting gusts of 60mph to 70mph inland, with 80mph winds on the coast," the Met office said.

The National Rivers Authority had not issued any flood warnings last night but was monitoring the situation. The Severn burst its banks at Worcester yesterday, prompting fears of a repeat of severe flooding last year. Homes and businesses were preparing for the worst as the river rose several feet above its normal level. It was expected to peak at midnight.

Driver spared

A disqualified motorist arrested while driving with an alcohol level nearly five times the legal limit escaped jail yesterday, sparking new calls from road safety campaigners for mandatory prison terms for those flouting the law. Norman Walsh, aged 28, of Bolton, Greater Manchester, received a six-month suspended sentence, a five-year ban and a £400 fine for his second conviction in six months.

Case thrown out

A senior policeman was cleared of shoplifting yesterday after a psychiatrist spoke in his defence. Magistrates at Wimbome, Dorset, threw out the case against Chief Inspector Roger Parnell, aged 48, after hearing that he had been suffering from depression. Mr Parnell had denied stealing £2.56 of groceries from a supermarket at Dorchester in August last year.

CORRECTION

Dr Cahal Daly, the Primate of All Ireland, was wrongly described as Cardinal on Wednesday.

Poll tax defaulter wins appeal for wrongful seizure

By NICHOLAS WATT

A COMMUNITY charge defaulter who had goods removed from his home by bailiffs last September after he failed to pay the tax won a court appeal yesterday against the London borough of Wandsworth for wrongful seizure of goods.

Stephen Crosby, aged 43, from Wimbledon, southwest London, hailed the decision by Wells Street magistrates as "the start of getting rid of the poll tax".

On September 18 last year, two bailiffs visited Mr Crosby's family home on behalf of Wandsworth council to collect outstanding poll tax bills owed by him and his family. Mr Crosby was out at the time but his son, Lyndon, aged 24, a trainee bailiff at the time, initially refused the men entry. When they called the police, however, he offered a post-dated cheque for the outstanding amount.

The bailiffs refused the cheque, and seized stereo equipment, a television and ornamental goods in the name of Mr Crosby senior and his wife Susan. Those were later sold. Graham White, the bailiff who appeared in court as a

witness yesterday, said he had listed the goods in the name of Stephen and Susan Crosby, as Lyndon Crosby had said they belonged to them when he first visited the family last August.

However, David Fingleton, the stipendiary magistrate, yesterday upheld Mr Crosby's appeal that the stereo system belonged to his son, Wayne, aged 20, and awarded him £310 compensation on behalf of his son.

Mr Fingleton said that he was not satisfied that the bailiffs had done enough to find out who owned the goods. Lyndon Crosby told the court that he had informed the bailiffs on their second visit in September that they were seizing his brother's goods in his father's name.

Mr White told the court, however, that he had asked who the goods belonged to and nobody had answered. Of his first visit in August, Mr White said: "I think I asked whose the goods were."

Mr Fingleton said it was vital that bailiffs found out whose property they were taking when seizing goods to enforce payment of the community charge.

Courts 'need more cash to cope with cases'

By OUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

MAGISTRATES' courts in England and Wales need an injection of government money to cope with the flood of poll tax cases, the Association of District Councils said yesterday.

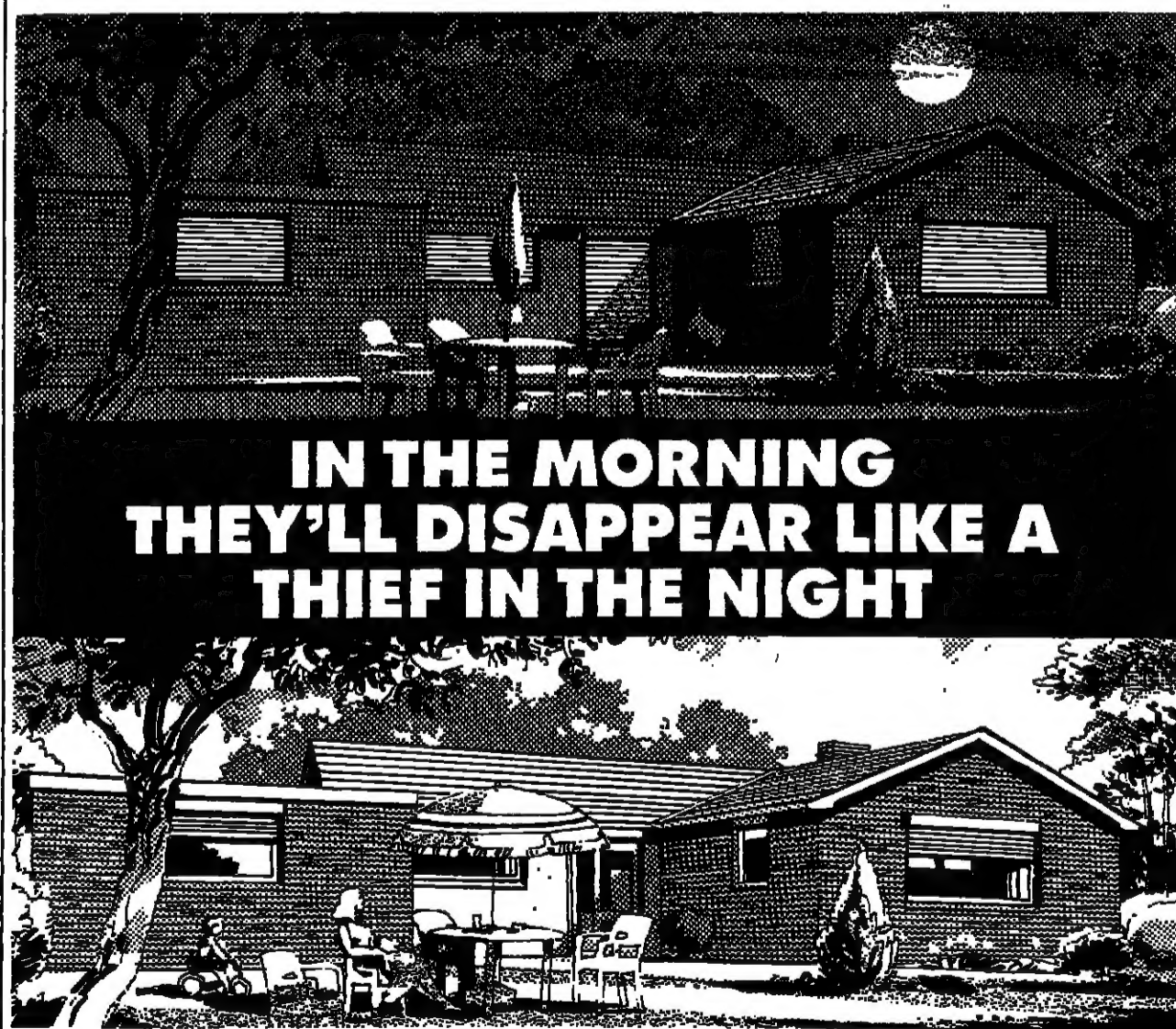
The 331 district councils in the association expect to have taken more than one million people to court for not paying the tax by the end of this financial year.

It says that the Home Office has failed to make additional funds available for extra courtrooms and magistrates to deal with the cases. As a result, courts were having to "block book" poll tax cases, with one bench dealing with up to 100 cases in a single day, and defaulters appearing in the dock ten at a time.

The Conservative-controlled association said that it would redouble its

efforts to persuade Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, to make extra resources available. It added that, in Scotland, the number of people failing to pay in the second year of the poll tax had been greater than in the first. "We are worried that, by next year, things will be worse and it will be too late to do anything to help the courts cope," an association spokesman said.

The Home Office said, however, that it believed that, after initial difficulties in some areas, the enforcement system was settling down well and that courts had adequate resources to cope. A spokesman said: "A lot of people coming before the courts would like to argue that they cannot afford to pay the community charge, but those are not matters which are legally any concern of the court."



IN THE MORNING
THEY'LL DISAPPEAR LIKE A
THIEF IN THE NIGHT

Network agreement 'threat to ITV independents'

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A NEW market-driven system for selling television programmes to the ITV network would lower quality standards and might force some licensees out of business, a senior broadcaster has said.

The system was agreed in principle last month by the majority of the 15 regional ITV companies. David Elstein, director of programming at Thames Television, said that the cost of buying programmes for the network from ITV companies and independents would rise sharply under the proposed central scheduling plan, as it would deprive ITV companies of their guaranteed right to commission and schedule



Shaw: "Price of bidding is million-dollar question"

their own programmes for a national audience. He said that ITV companies, and those challenging them for the new Channel 3 licences to be awarded later this year, are in grave danger of overbidding. "Some could go bust if they fail to sell enough programmes to the network while being forced to pay much higher prices for network programming," he said.

David Shaw, director of the Independent Television Association, said: "How high companies will bid is the million dollar question." The new agreement would not be set in stone until after the ITV bidders handed in their

applications. If the price of a network programme is dictated purely by ratings and how much advertising revenue it attracts, as recommended by the Office of Fair Trading, which must approve the network agreement, a significantly higher proportion of a fixed annual network budget of about £450 million will be devoted to such popular programmes as *Coronation Street*, *The Bill*, *Blind Date*, *Inspector Morse* and *Wish You Were Here*.

Mr Elstein said: "All high-cost, low-ratings productions will disappear out of peak time, with current affairs programmes like *World in Action* sure to be marginalised in the schedule. High-ratings productions will soak up the bulk of the budget, with little left over for second-tier production."

"Instead of 200 hours of original drama on ITV there will be 120 hours with 80 hours of repeats, which will also cost money. That will probably drive ITV's audience share down. It will also make a mockery of detailed ITC [Independent Television Commission] programme codes and the quality threshold, except for regional programming," Mr Elstein said.

Driver spared

A disqualified motorist arrested while driving with an alcohol level nearly five times the legal limit escaped jail yesterday, sparking new calls from road safety campaigners for mandatory prison terms for those flouting the law. Norman Walsh, aged 28, of Bolton, Greater Manchester, received a six-month suspended sentence, a five-year ban and a £400 fine for his second conviction in six months.

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Sheehy death in an Irish village ends hunt for Britain's most wanted criminal

Loner linked to a string of attacks by the IRA

By EDWARD GORMAN AND DAVID YOUNG

PATRICK Sheehy, found dead in the Irish Republic on Wednesday, was Britain's most wanted criminal. He was linked to a string of IRA bombings and other incidents on mainland Britain as far back as 1987.

During his years of notoriety, Sheehy, variously described as a loner, a maverick or a fanatic, became a fantasy figure who seemed able to evade detection by Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch and by Irish police with ease and carry out a succession of dramatic and deadly attacks.

His name, together with that of an accomplice, the alleged explosive and bomb making expert John Conaghy, who is still on the run, frequently appeared in front page news stories as the prime suspect in the latest IRA atrocity on the mainland.

There were reports of Sheehy being involved with IRA plans to assassinate Tom King, then Northern Ireland Secretary, in 1987, and in the bombing of the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal in 1989 which left 11 dead. He was also being sought by Irish police in connection with a failed kidnapping attempt on a Dublin businessman.

Sheehy, who was also linked to IRA activities in Europe, was reported at one stage to have travelled to Libya where he was said to have worked as an explosive instructor at a training camp run by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

Unless the IRA choose to reveal the full details of his career, it may never be known how much of this was fact or fantasy. Yesterday Scotland Yard objected to the title "Britain's most wanted man", saying that there was no pecking order for people it urgently wants to interview. "Sheehy was somebody we were very, very anxious to speak to," a spokesman said.

Sheehy, who was from the tiny village of Ballysteen on the banks of the Shannon in Co Limerick, was chosen by the IRA for active service in Britain because he was relatively unknown in the republic, had no serious criminal record and had never been fingerprinted. His association with militant republicanism ran only to selling Sinn Féin's weekly newspaper *An Phoblacht* in Limerick.

Born in 1960 to a family of eight children, he grew up to become a plasterer. He was about 5ft 11in tall, walked with a slight stoop, had brown hair, prominent teeth and a muscular build. He wore silver framed glasses.

In his native Ballysteen, locals still find it hard to reconcile the man they knew with the crimes he was suspected of committing. One said: "He was a nice chap as far as I remember him. He was not connected with IRA in any way that I know of. I do

not think he would be involved in the kind of things they are talking about."

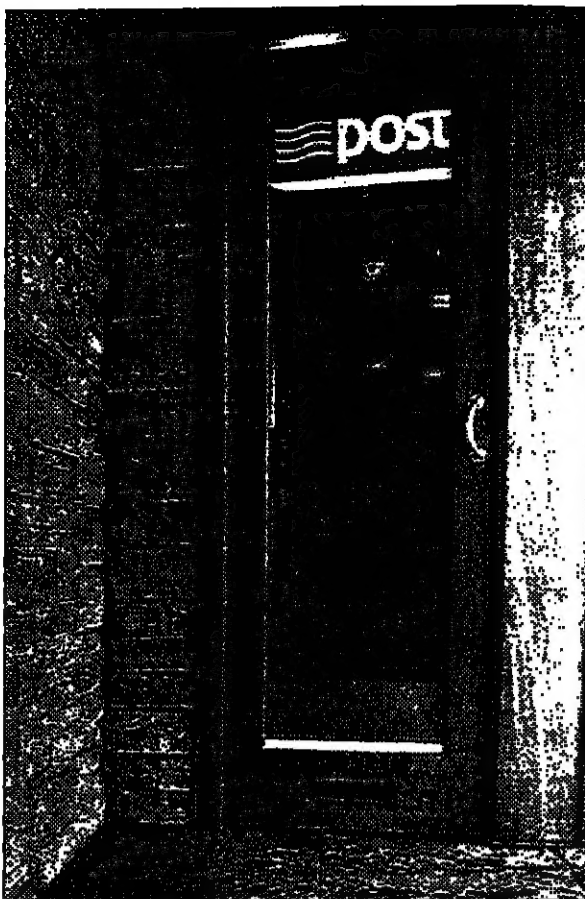
Sheehy moved to the top of Scotland Yard's most-wanted list in December 1988 after police found his passport with a signature matching the handwriting on a hit list of more than 100 prominent people, including Margaret Thatcher, in an IRA bomb factory at a house in Clapham, southwest London. It was his fingerprints that were found in the flat that led to the identification of his body yesterday.

Together with Conaghy, Sheehy, is thought to have fled the flat where more than 100lb of Semtex, high explosive, detonators, timers, machine guns, revolvers and armalite rifles were found. He is thought to have taken about 25lb of Semtex with him.

After that, Sheehy was linked by police to the IRA bomb attack on Inglis army barracks at Mill Hill in northwest London in August 1988 in which one soldier died and nine were injured; the shooting of a soldier at Ostend shortly afterwards; the attempted bombing of Tern Hill barracks in Shropshire in February 1989; the Deal bombing the following September, and the car bombing in Colchester in November which seriously injured an army staff sergeant.

Other attacks with which Sheehy's name was linked included the machine-gun attack on Sir Peter Terry, the former Governor of Gibraltar, at his home in Staffordshire in September last year, and an attempt to kill Lieutenant General Sir David Ramsbotham, in November 1989. Police believe that Sheehy may have been the fourth member of an IRA surveillance team watching the Wiltshire home of Tom King, then Northern Ireland Secretary, in 1987.

In July 1989 Hampshire police issued a photograph of Sheehy and Conaghy together with an artist's impression of a third man and a description of a woman who police believe was shielding Sheehy. They described Sheehy as "armed and dangerous" and said that he might be planning bomb attacks on army bases in Britain that summer.



A bullet hole in the telephone box at Nenagh where Sheehy's body was found; his relatives leaving the local mortuary after identifying him

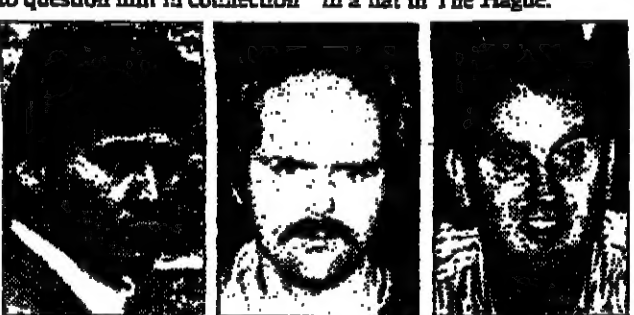
Most wanted men shot or sentenced

By RAY CLANCY

PREVIOUS holders of the infamous title — the most wanted terrorist — have, like Patrick Sheehy, either been killed or sentenced to long prison terms.

One of the most ruthless most wanted men was Dessie O'Hare, nicknamed the Border Fox because he successfully evaded capture on many occasions. In the early 1980s he was linked by the police with scores of terrorist incidents in Northern Ireland and the republic, and a huge search was made after John O'Grady, a Dublin dentist, was kidnapped. He was held to ransom by O'Hare and other members of a gang which chopped off two of his fingers. In 1988 O'Hare was jailed for 40 years.

Dominic McGlinchey, the former leader of the outlawed Irish National Liberation Army, was also known as the No 1 terrorist. Police wanted to question him in connection with 28 murders, 30 shootings and 11 bombings. He was jailed for 10 years in March 1986 for firearms offences.



The terror trio: O'Hare, McGlinchey and Grew

THE SHEEHY CRIME DOSSIER

THE Scotland Yard file on Patrick Sheehy will never be closed officially as investigations into his many crimes attributed to him continue in the search for his accomplices (David Young writes).

Since he became "active" in London in 1988 he is thought to have been involved in the following incidents:

August 1, 1988: soldier killed at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, north London.
December 20, 1988: police discover IRA bomb factory and arms cache in Clapham, south London. Man who fitted

Sheehy's description was seen running away.

February 21, 1989: three bombs went off at Ternhill Army Barracks, Shropshire.

September 22, 1989: bomb exploded at the Royal Marines School of Music, Deal, Kent. Eleven killed and 60 injured.

November 15, 1989: bomb planted under senior army officer's car outside home in Kelsae Place, London. It did not explode.

June 1 1990: soldier shot dead and another injured at

railway station in Lichfield, Staffordshire.

July 29, 1990: Ian Gow, MP, killed in car bomb outside his home in Hankham, East Sussex.

September 17, 1990: army colour sergeant shot as he left a recruiting office in Finchley, north London.

September 18, 1990: machine-gun attack on Sir Peter Terry, former governor of Gibraltar, at his home in Staffordshire.

January 3, 1991: Patrick Sheehy found dead in Nenagh, Co Tipperary.

Lying low in rural community

POLICE believe that Patrick Sheehy had spent some time on the run in Nenagh, a market town with a population of 6,000 in Co Tipperary. The town would have been big enough for him to escape the notice of the local police during nearly two years as a fugitive and it was close enough to his home village of Ballysteen, in Co Limerick, for him to keep in touch with associates.

Sheehy was found lying in a pool of blood outside the town's Post Office. By his side lay a Czech-made Taurus pistol. He was wearing jeans and a denim jacket and silver-rimmed spectacles were found in a pocket.

The villagers of Ballysteen said they were stunned when British police named Sheehy as a top IRA suspect. They knew "Paddy" as a hard worker from a decent family who had done building jobs locally before leaving the area.

"People are shocked by the allegations," one local said. "I don't believe that Patrick Sheehy would ever have pulled a trigger."

London car bombs mastermind buried

By PETER VICTOR

DAVID O'Connell, the former IRA leader who masterminded the London car bombing campaign, was buried in Dublin yesterday. A lone gunman fired a shot outside a church in a traditional farewell to Mr O'Connell, who died at his Dublin home on New Year's eve.

Mr O'Connell, aged 53, a key figure in the IRA during some of its worst outrages in the early 1970s, was buried in the republican section of Glasnevin cemetery. His coffin was draped in the Irish flag and flanked by a guard of honour in paramilitary uniform.

A school teacher with three children, he was a republican with a hatred of the British. Although frequently described as the IRA chief of staff, he was actually its director of intelligence. As the provisional IRA's strategy coordinator, he ordered the mainland bombing campaign that peaked in the mid 1970s.

He was thought still to have been influential in 1982, when 11 guardsmen were killed by bombs in Hyde Park. By then,

however, his role was reduced to that of a figurehead, according to Ian Geldard of the journal *Terror Update*. "He was involved in the negotiation of a ceasefire in 1975 and lost a lot of face. The whole thing was blamed on the southern leaders' group and, by 1977, the leadership had slipped out of their hands." He left the Provisional Sinn Féin four years ago to form the breakaway Republican Sinn Féin group, a small group with little influence.

Police were on duty yesterday to prevent the IRA turning the funeral into a showcase with volleys of shots over the grave. Among the many mourners was Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin leader.

Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary, will receive a peace prize in the Irish Republic because his efforts have brought new hope to the province. He has been chosen for the award, made annually by the Tipperary Peace Convention, for his continuing efforts for new political dialogue in Ulster.

Revenue to spend £7m on tax-saving advice

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

THE Inland Revenue is spending £7 million on an unprecedented advertising campaign to convince 15 million savers that they should pay less tax.

As part of the campaign, the taxman embarked on his first television advertisements yesterday to persuade the 15 million bank and building society savers who are non-taxpayers to register so that no tax is deducted from the interest they earn when composite rate tax is abolished on April 6.

At present banks and building societies withdraw the composite rate tax at 22 per cent from interest paid to all savers; when the tax is scrapped, non-taxpayers, mainly pensioners, women and children, will be credited with the full interest on their savings, and taxpayers will be charged 25 per cent at source.

The advertisements, from the D'Arcy Masius Benton and Bowles agency, will be shown mainly on daytime and early evening television.

Launching the campaign yesterday, Francis Maude, financial secretary to the Treasury, said: "It isn't every day that the government spends money telling people how to avoid paying tax." Abolition of composite rate tax, which was announced in last year's Budget by the then chancellor, John Major, would benefit more than a quarter of the population, he said.

Later this month every household will receive a leaflet explaining the tax changes and who should register for gross payment of interest. It will include a form to register as a non-taxpayer. The Inland Revenue estimates that 4.75 million retired people, 4.5 million non-working wives, 3.25 million children and 2.5 million other people, including students, will benefit.

Mr Maude said that the campaign was much more cost-effective than taking on staff to deal with people failing to register. The Revenue will open 24 offices with 3,500 extra staff to deal with tax refunds to people who do not register.

Cornea transplanted from blind man's left eye to right in unique operation

By PETER DAVENPORT

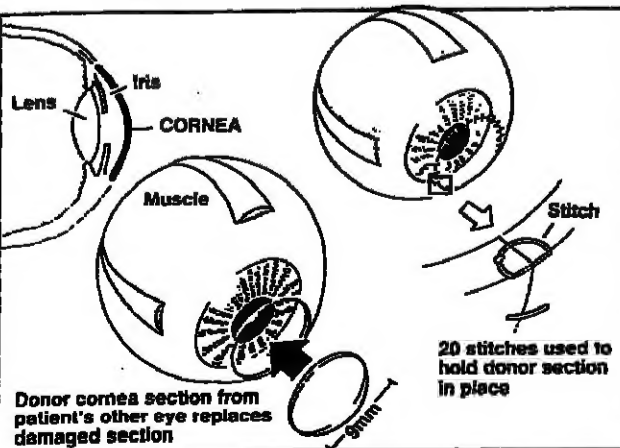
SURGEONS who yesterday tried to restore the sight of a blind man by performing a transplant using the cornea from one of his own eyes claimed it was the first time the technique had been used.

Frank Melon, aged 72, was recovering last night in the North Riding Infirmary, Middlesbrough, after a three-hour operation during which the cornea from his left eye was transplanted into his right.

The ophthalmic surgeon, David Smerdon, said that he was able to carry out the operation only because of the "freak of nature" which had left Mr Melon totally blind in both eyes, but for different reasons.

The retina in his left eye had failed, while the cornea in the right was damaged. A routine transplant operation last year failed when Mr Melon's eye rejected a donor cornea after three weeks during which his sight had returned.

Yesterday Mr Smerdon said: "I have been specialising for 12 years, and in the past three years I have performed 120 cornea grafts. In all that time, and during my training, I have never come across a situation where a patient's cornea is transplanted on to the other eye. The operation is



Donor cornea section from patient's other eye replaces damaged section

described in text books, but only in theoretical terms." Mr Melon, from Billingham, Cleveland, has been blind in his left eye since the age of seven and lost the sight in his right eye four years ago. Surgeons said last night that the operation had been a technical success, but it would be several weeks before they could tell whether sight had been restored to his right eye.

Mr Smerdon said he was optimistic. "It is impossible for the patient to reject his own cornea. The real problem was that it could be damaged during the handling stage. I think the operation is his one and only chance of getting his sight back."

Melon's sight was intricate and complicated and lasted some three hours. A team of two anaesthetists, a theatre nurse, five other nurses and three student doctors were on hand to assist the surgeon.

The first stage was to remove a 9mm diameter section of the cornea of the left eye. It was then put into a tissue culture medium and the left eye protected with a temporary soft contact lens and a clear plastic shield. Then the medical equipment, instruments and clothes of the medical team were changed to prevent infection passing from the left eye to the right. A 9mm section was removed from the right cornea and the similar section from

the left eye taken from the tissue culture medium and stitched into place with 20 tiny nylon sutures. The operation was completed as a normal cornea transplant.

Again, the transplant instruments and the clothing of the medical team were changed as they completed the operation by taking a 9mm section from a donor cornea supplied by the UK transplant centre into the left eye.

Although it was not done with the hope or intention of restoring sight to the left eye, surgeons are confident it will be an aesthetically successful transplant. Last night the surgeon said that Mr Melon could already distinguish light and darkness with his right eye, which was protected only by a clear plastic shield. But it will be some time before the doctors can tell to what extent sight has been restored.

Before the operation Mr Melon was totally blind and had to be led about. Doctors believe that if he regains what they term navigation vision the operation will have been a success and will add greatly to his quality of life.

Before the operation Mr Melon said he was looking forward to being able to see his wife, Kathleen, again. He said: "I'll go home and take a real good look at her. I haven't seen her for a while."

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The maligned culprit of horror tales joins list of protected species

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

THE adder, whose fork put the bubble in the witches' cauldron in *Macbeth*, is to receive full legal protection under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act after a campaign to save it from extinction.

Britain's only venomous snake is one of three threatened species whose wilful death or injury will incur a fine of up to £2,000 for the perpetrator after an announcement yesterday by David Trippier, minister of state for the environment and countryside.

The much maligned snake, whose numbers have declined from six-figure abundance at the turn of the century to probably fewer than 20,000, is on the brink of extinction in many of its favourite sandy heathland habitats. In spite of its reputation for venomous attacks, the adder causes the death of only one person every ten years.

Tom Langton, a leading

herpetologist, said: "This is the end of a very long campaign to clear the name of the adder which has been maligned since the Garden of Eden. You only have to go to church or read the Bible to know the snake is the symbol of evil. It is a paradox as 80 per cent of snakes worldwide are harmless. Adders are very shy and secretive creatures and only bite if you try to pick one up or accidentally sit on one. People are at much greater risk from bee and wasp stings and dog bites."

The adder, generally a foot long, whose habitat has been under increasing attack from agriculture and housing development, is to be found in decreasing numbers in southeast Scotland, the Yorkshire moors, the Borders, northeast Wales, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset and Hampshire, the north and south Downs and along the Essex and Suffolk coasts. Under the Wild-



The adder, which causes the death of one person in ten years, and (right, foreground) the allis shad, next to the unprotected twaite shad



life and Countryside Act the adder has so far been protected only from illegal selling but amendments that will shortly be laid before Parliament mean it will become the 116th species to receive full protection since the act came into force a decade ago.

It will be joined on the protected list by the allis shad and the freshwater pearl mussel. The mussels survive only in pollution-free, fast-flowing rivers, mostly in Scotland but also in small areas of Wales and the north and southwest of England.

mussels, check for pearls and remove them without actually killing the mussel. But the chances of them finding a pearl are remote.

Nevertheless the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury have crowns containing pearls from freshwater mussels.

The elusive allis shad, once described as "a plebeian fish excluded from all reputable banquets", used to abound in the Severn and the Wye, where it ascends in April and May to spawn.

The amendments to the act mean that decisions have been reached on all but one of the recommendations made by the NCC in its first five-yearly review of UK native species in 1986. The remaining species is the basking shark, which might have received legal protection but for the intervention of some Scottish fishing interests.

Leading article, page 11

Institute of British Geographers conference in Sheffield

Warming may make sea level fall, say scientists

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

GLOBAL warming will not have so great an effect on ocean levels as previous computer models have predicted, the annual conference of the Institute of British Geographers in Sheffield was told yesterday. Sea levels may even fall, rather than rise to swamp large areas of land.

Professor David Sugden and Dr Nick Hulton of the geography department at Edinburgh university reported on studies they have made of the East Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets. It is the behaviour of these huge volumes of ice under changing climatic conditions that would largely determine the levels of the oceans. If they melt, the oceans will rise; but if global warming increases and snow fall and ice sheets grow, then sea levels will fall.

Professor Sugden, working with Professor George Denton and David Marchant of the University of Maine, in the United States, studied the East Antarctic ice sheet, a volume of ice four kilometres thick and the area of the US. If all that ice melted, ocean levels would rise by 50-60 metres.

The team visited an area of exposed rock, known as the dry valleys, in the McMurdo area of the transantarctic mountains. Here areas of dry ground stick through the ice,

and the perimeter of the ice has advanced and retreated through geological time as climates have changed. By measuring the position of the ice perimeter at different periods and comparing it with what is known about the climate then, it is possible to work out whether warming makes the ice get thicker or thinner.

The answer is that it gets thicker, Professor Sugden said. "The East Antarctic ice sheet is a relatively stable element in the Earth's environment," he said. "In any global warming it is likely to expand slightly and thus contribute to a slight lowering of the sea level."

Dr Hulton, a postgraduate student at Edinburgh, has studied the Greenland ice sheet using a computer model. That predicts how the sheet will grow or shrink in different climatic conditions, and successfully reproduces the actual behaviour of the ice sheet during the last glaciation, as shown by geological evidence from Greenland.

When predictions of global warming are fed into the model, it shows that it will shrink at the edges but grow in the centre, as a result of increased snow fall. The net effect will be a rise in the sea level of only a few millimetres



Challenging global warming theories: Professor David Sugden (left) and Dr Nick Hulton

Index used to gauge extra payments to GPs 'unfair'

AN INDEX used by the health department to measure the degree of deprivation of an area and allocate extra payments to doctors produces results that are neither sensible nor fair, the conference was told (Nigel Hawkes writes).

Martyn Senior, of the geography department at Salford university, said that the underprivileged area index (UFA) designed for the department by Professor Brian Jarman, of St Mary's hospital medical school, and used to distribute £26 million a year of "deprivation payments", did not measure

deprivation but the workload on general practitioners, an entirely different concept.

The index also produced abrupt and unrealistic divisions between GPs living next door to one another, Dr Senior said.

For instance, in Waltham Forest, east London, a GP in Hoe Street electoral ward was entitled to a payment of £5.05 a patient because his area scored exactly 30 on the index scale. The GP next door in Cann Hall ward scored 29.91, falling below the threshold and receiving no deprivation payment. On an average GP's list of 2,000 patients, that

would cost the unlucky GP £10,100 a year.

In the case of Wales, additional criteria were used, Dr Senior said, because otherwise the principle would qualify only for a very small number of payments. Measured by the Jarman index, it was not deprived.

The result of the system is to favour the South-East, East Anglia and the east Midlands, with such coastal resorts as Hastings, Folkestone and Hove qualifying for payments while "problem" estates on the edges of big cities did less well.

The shift away from manufacturing into services as the main provider of jobs has accelerated sharply in the Thatcher years.

By 1987, there were only five district authorities left of the 459 in England and Wales in which manufacturing accounted for more than half the jobs, Alan Townsend, of the department of geography at Durham university, told the conference.

They were Pendle (Lancashire), Barrow-in-Furness (Cumbria), Tewkesbury (Gloucestershire), Sedgefield (Co Durham) and Rossendale (Lancashire). "Services have almost replaced factories as the key to local economic development," Dr Townsend said.

In some areas, manufacturing appears close to extinction. In the South-East as a whole, only 17.8 per cent of the total value of economic activity in 1988 came from manufacturing.

Schemes to cut surplus 'are destined to fail'

ATTEMPTS by the European Community to reduce agricultural surpluses by setting aside land or reducing the intensity of production seem destined to fail, the institute was told.

A survey by John Tarrant and Dick Cobb, of the school of environmental sciences at East Anglia university, of the attitudes of farmers in the cereal-growing heartlands of Norfolk and Suffolk showed few if any willing to change their agricultural practices at any reasonable level of financial inducement.

At levels that the EC might be prepared to offer (£50 an acre for reducing production by 20 per cent) only 3 per cent of the 158 farmers questioned

said they would be interested. The responses suggest that extensification is likely to prove no more popular than set-aside, which has fallen short of the commission's hopes to reduce output by 2.3 per cent. This year, only half of 1 per cent of Europe's land has been taken out of production, barely a fifth of what needs to be achieved.

The failure so far of set-aside had two causes, David Briggs, of Huddersfield polytechnic, told the conference. One was delays in introducing the schemes, the other was the attitude of farmers, who were reluctant to abandon land. "It goes against the culture of farming," Professor Tarrant said.

produce would be central elements in the trade negotiations when they resumed, possibly later this month. The talks between 107 signatory countries of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) broke down in Brussels last month, mainly because of the EC's refusal to accede to demands by the US and the Cairns group of 14 food-exporting nations for sharp cuts in farm subsidies.

The US and its allies wanted most forms of subsidy reduced by 75 per cent over the next ten years, with a cut of 90 per cent in the export subsidies used by the EC to dump its food surpluses on world markets. The Community was not prepared to offer more than a 30 per cent cut over ten years backdated to 1986, with no specific commitment to cut export subsidies. The GATT talks were not the

Effects on animals of pesticides mix to be investigated

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

STUDIES into the toxic effects of pesticide "cocktails" on animals is being planned by British scientists, it was disclosed yesterday.

The three-year project, which is expected to get environment department funding in the spring, will test evidence that animals exposed to mixtures of fungicides, insecticides and herbicides could be at greater risk than had previously been supposed.

News of the project comes in the wake of findings by the government's Drinking Water Inspectorate that greater concentrations of two common herbicides, both linked with cancer, are being found in drinking water. One sample, which is being rechecked, exceeds the government's own health guidance level and is 40 times greater than the European Community's official standards.

The study is being drafted by scientists at the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (ITE) and Reading university. Dr Derek Stevenson, an expert based at the Robens Institute for Industrial and Environmental Health and Safety, said yesterday: "These mixtures, where you do not exceed the limits, are one of the biggest areas of uncertainty in terms of both long-term and short-term health risks."

Preliminary research by the ITE/Reading team with red-legged partridges found that a mixture of pesticides can greatly increase the hazardous effects of a single chemical. The team is deciding which pesticides to study, but the research could include atrazine and simazine, the two

herbicides used by councils and British Rail as general purpose weedkillers and which were found in drinking water samples.

The research is likely to be welcomed by both sides of the pesticide debate. In spite of the widespread use of pesticides in horticulture and agriculture, little is known about the long-term health hazards from exposure to low levels of pesticides, experts say.

Dr John Inman, a Leicestershire GP instrumental in the British Medical Association's report into pesticides published last October, said yesterday that, until research showed a pesticide to be safe, it should be banned.

However, some scientists are concerned that, in the absence of hard facts on the effects of pesticides, the case against their use is becoming increasingly hysterical and could place a heavy, and possibly unnecessary, burden on the water industry. The low EC limit on herbicides in drinking water is based not on evidence of deleterious health effects, but on the ability of technology to detect the presence of a pesticide.

Dr Stevenson believes the balance against pesticides may have swung too far. "If you look at life expectancy and infant mortality in the chemical age, you find we have improved these overall. I am not sure the pesticide industry is getting a fair deal at the moment. Ideally, we should not be exceeding limits. But occasional slight overexposure is not necessarily going to harm anyone."

Farmers untroubled by chemical review

THE discovery of traces of herbicides in drinking water, which has been described by the environment department as worrying, is likely to be the least of the troubles facing farmers this year as they battle against falling prices and pressure for cuts in subsidies (Michael Hornsby writes).

The herbicide causing most concern, Atrazine, is mostly used to keep down underbrush and weeds on railway lines and motorways. It does not figure in the top 100 pesticides used by farmers. It is used to control weeds in maize, but that crop is not common in Britain. Farmers said yesterday that even if its use were banned, the impact on agriculture would be negligible.

The agriculture ministry said yesterday that Atrazine was "undergoing an emergency review which should be completed by mid-spring". A ban would be considered only when all the data was available.

The government's drinking

water inspectorate found Atrazine in concentrations 40 times higher than the one part per 10 billion standard laid down by the European Community. "The EC standard is open to a lot of questions, as being far too severe. Even at this concentration there is no suggestion that it poses a health threat," the ministry said.

Far more serious for farmers would be a ban on Isoproturon, a herbicide widely used to control black grass, a weed that affects winter-sown wheat. The chemical was found in much smaller concentrations than Atrazine. The agriculture ministry is reviewing the use of Isoproturon, but not on an emergency basis.

Use of chemicals by farmers has declined markedly over the past decade, falling from 33,000 tons by weight of active ingredient in 1983 to 24,000 tons last year, according to the British Agrochemicals Association.

EC 'must offer bigger concessions in Gatt talks'

By MICHAEL HORSNBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE European Community must be prepared to offer bigger concessions on cutting farm subsidies when the world trade talks resume in Geneva, David Curry, a parliamentary secretary at the agriculture department, told farmers yesterday.

Mr Curry, speaking at the annual Oxford Farming Conference, said that a successful outcome to the negotiations would also depend on "more realistic expectations" on the part of the United States. At a later press conference he accused the Americans of negotiating "with all the finesse of the Kray brothers".

Mr Curry said that the EC would have to accept that reducing export subsidies and increasing access to its own market for other countries

produce would be central elements in the trade negotiations when they resumed, possibly later this month. The talks between 107 signatory countries of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) broke down in Brussels last month, mainly because of the EC's refusal to accede to demands by the US and the Cairns group of 14 food-exporting nations for sharp cuts in farm subsidies.

The US and its allies wanted most forms of subsidy reduced by 75 per cent over the next ten years, with a cut of 90 per cent in the export subsidies used by the EC to dump its food surpluses on world markets. The Community was not prepared to offer more than a 30 per cent cut over ten years backdated to 1986, with no specific commitment to cut export subsidies. The GATT talks were not the

only pressure on the EC to reduce subsidies, Mr Curry said. Expenditure on agriculture in the Community was "a game beginning to run out of control", and this year could be at least £900 million over budget.

"The principal reasons why spending has proved so hard to control is that the Community still produces too much at an economic cost that is too great," Mr Curry said. Aggravating factors over the past year have been a weak dollar, falling world prices and the problems with the beef market.

The government accepted that there would have to be measures to soften the impact of cost-cutting programmes on farmers, but was worried that some of the ideas taking shape in Brussels would penalise larger British farmers and be tantamount to "deliberate sponsorship of

inefficient agriculture". There was particular concern about the European Commission's proposal for direct income aids to farmers. "We would not favour paying farmers simply for being farmers," he said.

The government would also reject moves to exempt small farmers from the effects of subsidy cuts and shift the burden onto their larger colleagues. "Very few full-time British farmers are likely to meet the Community definition of a small farmer, and that could mean that the burden of support cuts will fall unfairly on the United Kingdom."

Mr Curry said that a stepped-up set-aside policy, where farmers are paid to take part of their animal land out of production, could be one solution, provided the land set-aside was put to an environmentally positive use.

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Virgin airline challenges BA on Tokyo route

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

RICHARD Branson, head of Virgin Atlantic Airways, yesterday threatened to withdraw his airline from the London-to-Tokyo air route unless it is allowed to operate a daily service in competition with British Airways.

Mr Branson told a Civil Aviation Authority tribunal that Virgin could no longer compete on the route if BA were allowed to increase its services to 15 a week while his airline was limited to four.

"A daily service is essential if we are to offer real competition to the customer," Mr Branson told the tribunal. "If British Airways increased their frequencies and we could not, the effects would be frightening, and it would be very difficult to see how we could survive on that route."

The hearing may prove to be one of the CAA's most significant

ones. If Mr Branson succeeds, it may lead to a flood of demands for curbs on British Airways.

The London-to-Tokyo route is one of the world's most profitable, with aircraft flying almost full and fares kept artificially high by the fierce protectionism of Japan.

Although the four airlines — two of them British — that fly the route would like to increase the number of flights, they are forbidden from doing so because of tight controls on landing and take-off "slots" at Narita airport, which claims that it is officially full.

In inter-governmental talks last year, however, it was agreed that the number of flights allowed for British airlines could be increased by four, from 17 to 21 a week, and Virgin Atlantic immediately bought additional aircraft and programmed extra services on the assumption that it would get at least two of these.

The Japanese, however, refused to increase landing slots, and the only way the British could gain from the additional frequencies was by BA juggling its own transit services. This squeezed out Virgin, which was still limited to four flights a week, and Mr Branson's airline has asked the CAA to force BA to change its services again and to give Virgin the slots freed.

British Airways is fiercely resisting the move, and claims that Virgin is prepared only to fly profitable routes while expecting BA to operate non-profitable services to keep the British flag flying.

The CAA must decide whether it has the power, and the gall, to tell British Airways to hand slots at a foreign airport to Virgin in the name of competition. If it refuses to act, it is implicitly admitting that BA is the dominant British airline whose main competition will always be foreign airlines. If it acts, the door is open for other airlines to bring such challenges to BA and will give official credence to the idea that a landing slot is a tradeable commodity.

The belief is growing that a compromise will allow Virgin two extra services a week.

Top awards for 'world class' buildings

By CHARLES KNEVITT
ARCHITECTURE CORRESPONDENT

THREE buildings receive national awards for architecture from the Royal Institute of British Architects today, compared with 16 last year — a sign of rising standards rather than the deepening recession in the construction industry, according to Max Hutchinson, the institute's president.

Two company headquarters, one for the Imagination concern and one for Ready Mixed Concrete, and a local authority school in Hampshire are all "world-class buildings", Mr Hutchinson said. "If only more speculative developments matched their standard."

One will be nominated as the president's choice of building of the year when the awards are presented on January 17. The international headquarters of Ready Mixed Concrete at Egham, Surrey, by Edward Cullinan Architects, is being strongly tipped.

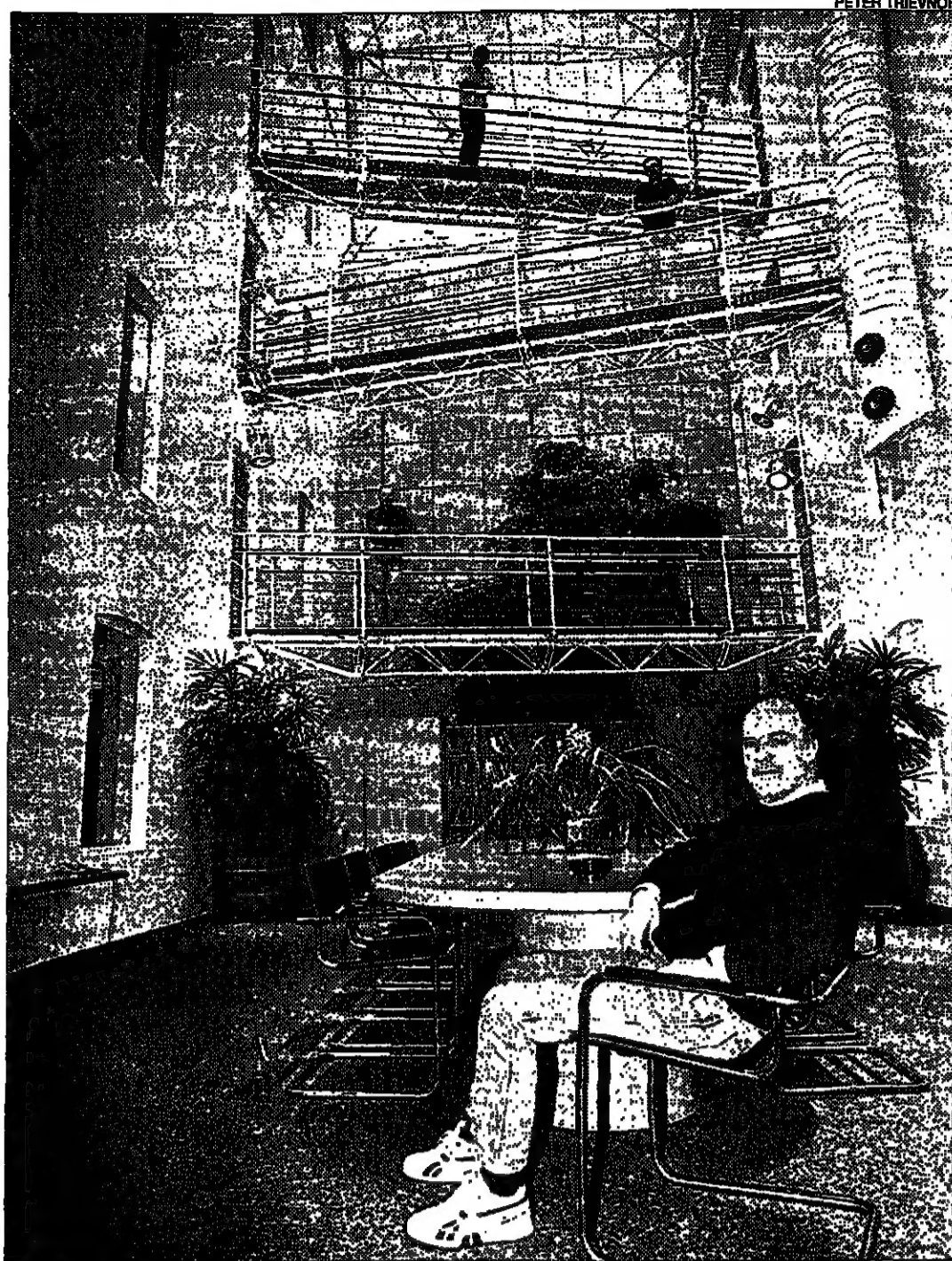
The Cullinan design linked and extended three Victorian and Georgian buildings on a partial green belt site by planting the roof of the new single-storey extension so that it is almost invisible from above. Where it does intrude, for example as air vents, they are disguised as outsize chess pieces.

Follies, pavilions and gazebos are surrounded by hedged gardens, and two squash courts and a swimming pool have been positioned for easy access outside normal office hours. The building won the top Civic Trust award for 1990.

Queens Inclusion Middle School, at Cowplain, Hampshire, is the work of Colin Stansfield Smith, the county architect, and his department. He was named two months ago as the 1991 Royal Gold Medallist for Architecture.

The school, described by the assessors as "a clear social and cultural statement", is also in a rural setting on the edge of a large meadow beside 95 acres of mature pine and oak trees.

Sunlight is brought into the centre of the silver-painted steel structure through a small transparent vault covering classrooms, and its open plan is partially segregated by white partitions and fittings. The bright red furniture was chosen jointly by



The architect Ron Herron in the restored and converted Imagination headquarters building

the head teacher and the job architect.

The building for the Imagination design and promotion company has won previous awards for its architect, Ron Herron of Herron Associates. "Would that we could all work in an office like

this," the assessors said. The run-down Edwardian building, just off Tottenham Court Road in central London, was given a dramatic face-lift to upgrade office accommodation and provide a new image. A lightweight tensile roof hung between two

buildings creates a large covered courtyard, also traversed by pedestrian bridges.

The assessors said the conservationist and interventionist aspects of the architect's approach demonstrated "a brilliant assurance".

Mother and daughter die in tower block fire

Two women died after fire broke out at their seventh-floor tower block flat in Motherwell, Strathclyde, yesterday. They were Georgina Lang, aged 64, and her daughter Lily, aged 40.

Stanley Struthers, a neighbour, who raised the alarm, said that the cupboard containing the fire hose reel had been locked. "We have no keys to get access to the water hoses because of vandalism. I could maybe have done something if I could have got to a hose."

However, a fire station spokesman said: "Given the circumstances, no one would have been able to fight it except firemen wearing breathing apparatus." The cause is being investigated.

Meningitis alert

West Midlands regional health authority has alerted parents after a man aged 20 died from meningitis in Birmingham on December 30.

CS gas charge

Bertrand Gachot, aged 27, a French racing driver, was remanded on bail yesterday by Horseferry Road magistrates charged with possessing CS tear gas and assaulting a taxi driver.

Sword in stone

John Dawson, aged 42, a builder, found a 1,300-year-old Saxon sword embedded in stone in an old fireplace at a 17th-century cottage in Barton-upon-Humber, Humberside.

Water order ends

Bristol Water yesterday lifted a drought order, allowing water to be used for industrial purposes, but retained a hosepipe ban.

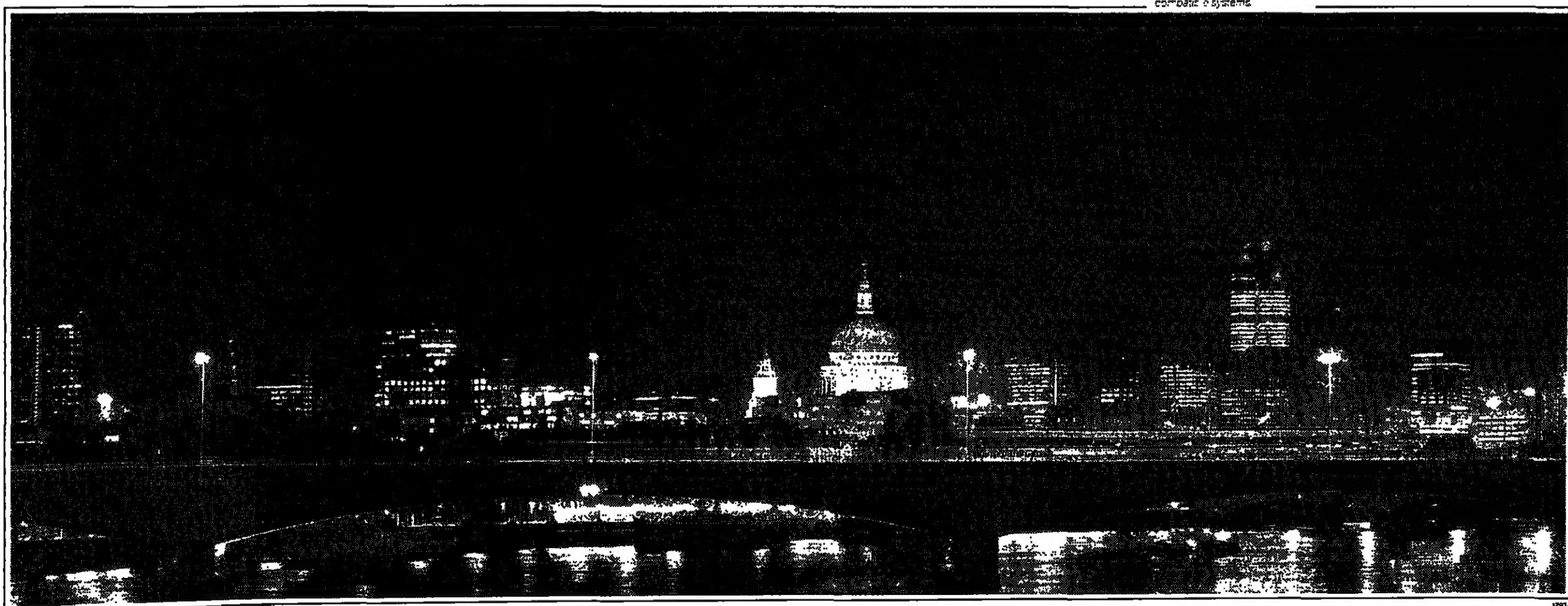
Chemical spray

A man is in hospital after being sprayed with a toxic chemical at the Rhone-Poulenc ISC chemical works at Avonmouth on Wednesday. Joe Hubbard, aged 50, of Nailsea, Avon, is "comfortable".

£250,000 winner

The £250,000 National Savings premium bonds prize for January has been won by the holder of bond number 20XT 351516, of Essex.

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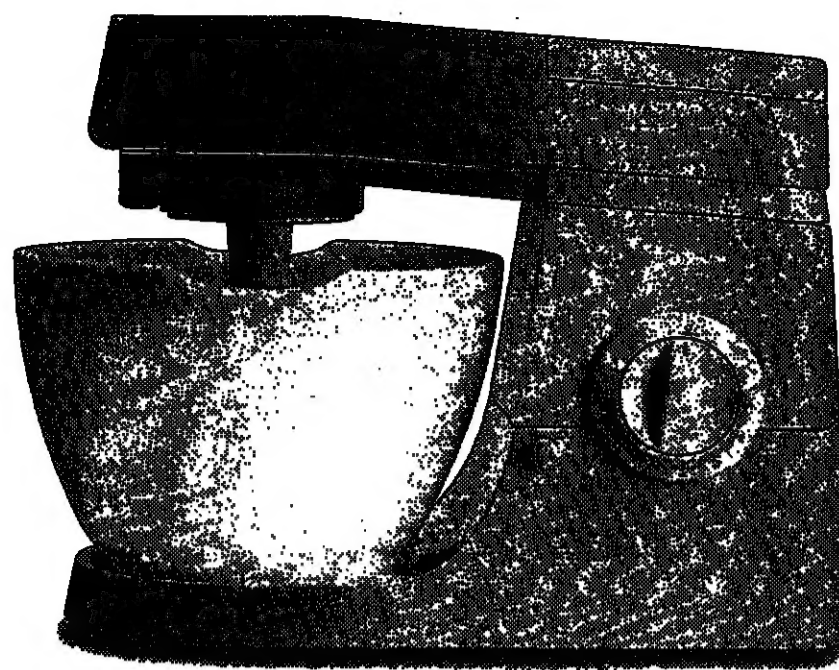
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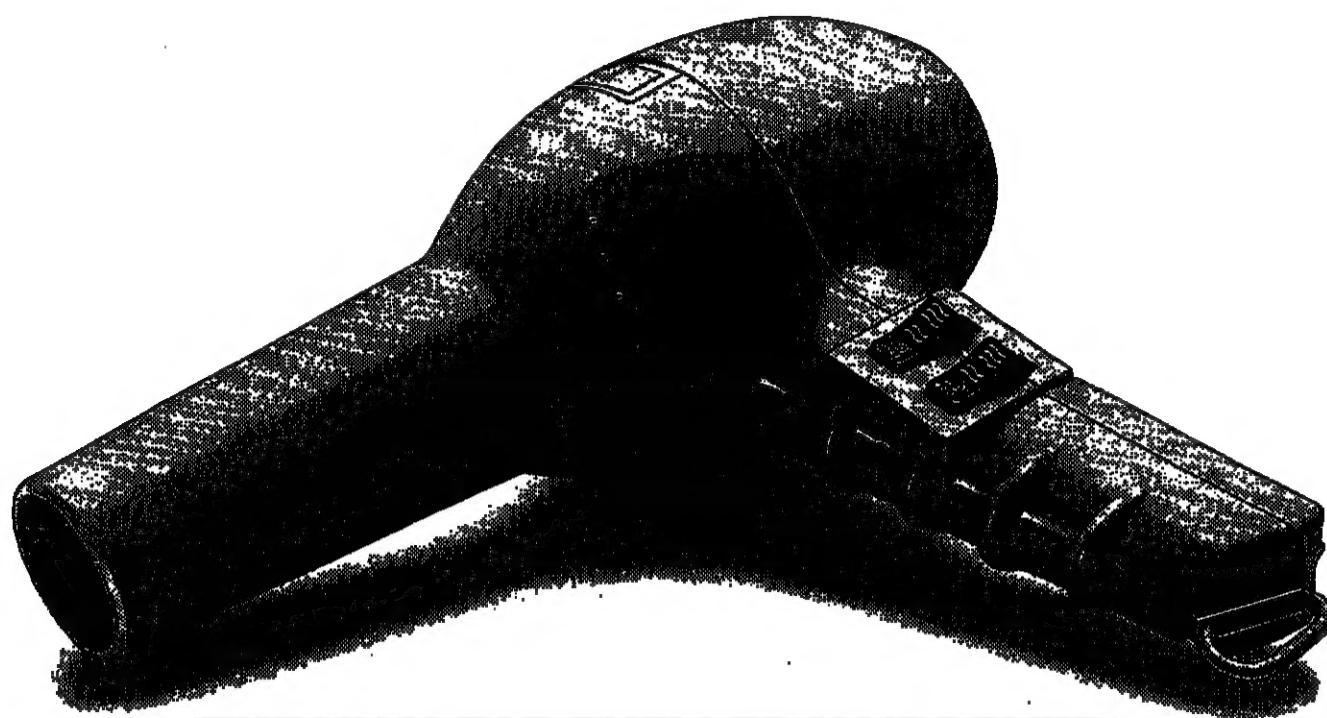
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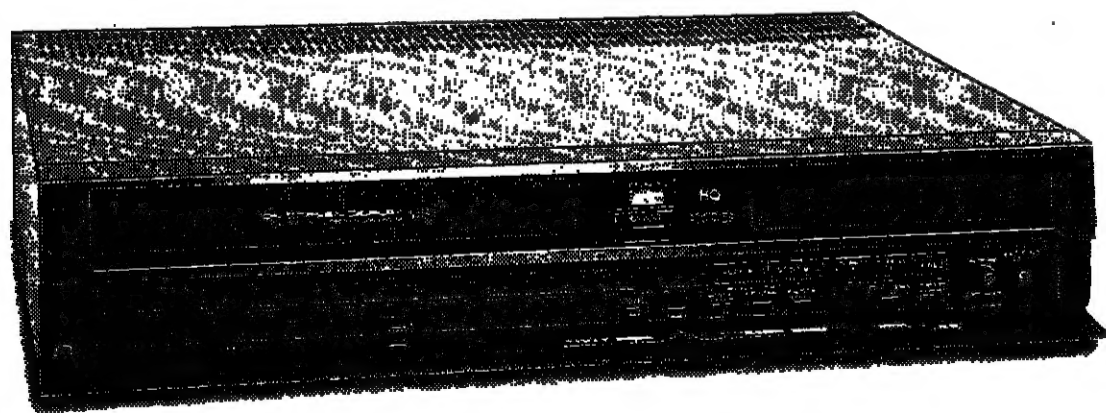
THE OIL FIRED KETTLE.



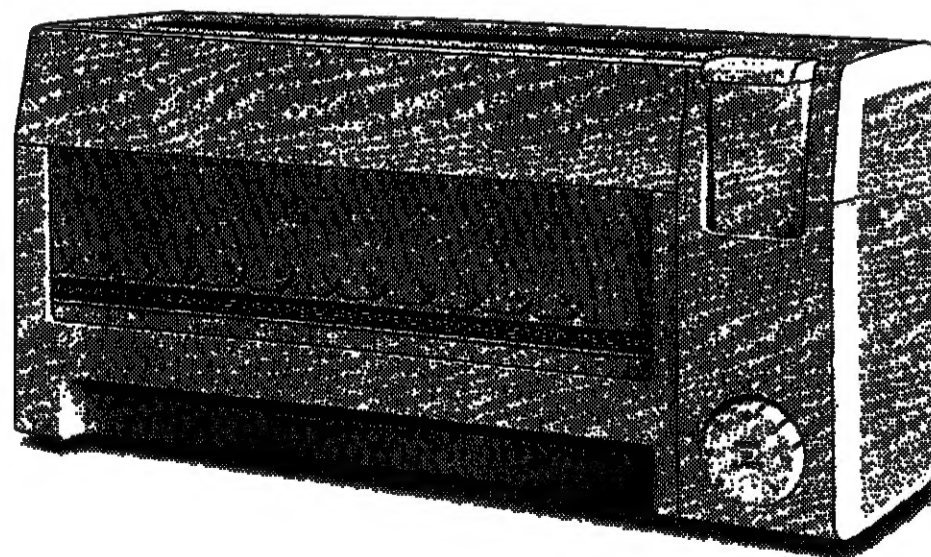
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مكتبة من الأصل

Greece tries to stem flow of Albanian refugees

From A CORRESPONDENT IN IOANNINA, GREECE

ANOTHER 500 shivering Albanian refugees crossed the snow-covered border in to Greece yesterday after walking for up to 15 hours, defying border guards and leaving behind families and homes.

Authorities in the northern town of Ioannina said that more than 4,000 refugees, most of them ethnic Greeks, crossed the border from the hardline communist state this week. More than 6,000 have arrived since the exodus began early last month.

The alternate interior minister, Nikos Kitiros, and the head of the Greek armed forces, General Ioannis Verivakis, who arrived in Ioannina to organise the government's efforts, said 2,000 refugees had been housed in schools, churches and state buildings in northern Greece, and another 1,000 accommodated in tents at an army camp. Some of them were sent to Athens and other cities.

All hospitals in the area have been put on alert, particularly for babies suffering from pneumonia. There are fears of an epidemic from the bad living conditions, as

the refugees are crammed in small rooms and some choose to sleep outdoors to escape the smell of urine. They have no bathing facilities, and food could become scarce.

Banks have opened special accounts for refugee relief, the Greek Red Cross is sending doctors, tents and medical supplies to the border, and the government has asked the United Nations High Commission for Refugees to assess the fleeing Albanians' needs.

In Athens, the foreign minister, Antonis Samaras, reiterated the conservative government's position that the 350,000-strong Greek community in southern Albania should stay put, and await the fruits of democratisation recently announced by President Alija. Mr Samaras accused Albania of encouraging the exodus by spreading rumours that Greece would give the refugees land, television sets, cars and other goods. A Greek government spokesman said that it was a deliberate plan so that the ethnic Greeks would play no role in the multiparty elections next month.

Mr Samaras said that the prime minister, Constantinos Mitsotakis, would discuss the refugee issue with President Alija during a two-day visit to Tirana, focussing on guarantees of safety and non-prosecution for those who wished to return. But few of the incoming refugees are prepared to go back, and gave dramatic accounts of their escape.

"My 27-year-old son and three others were caught on December 13, when they tried to escape," Vassilis Mathios, aged 56, who fled to Greece on Christmas Eve, said. "They were hanged on the electrified barbed wire across the border, and then killed with bayonets. Whatever the situation here, it is still paradise compared to the hell of Albania."

Another refugee, Vassilis Kartalos, aged 28, had his left foot amputated in a Greek hospital after being shot by Albanian border guards. He said: "Albania is a country in ruins, a country of prisoners which is ready to explode."

Leonidas Xathos, aged 43, left his two children and wife behind in the hope of a better life after spending eight years in jail for "inciting discord". He said: "I could not take the beatings, the hunger and the constant fear anymore."



Colour party: Soviet Jews, who plan to emigrate to Israel, celebrating the opening of the Israeli consulate in Moscow yesterday, and Arieh Levin, the consul general, running up the Israeli flag. He is the Jewish state's first diplomat to be based in Moscow since 1967, when the Soviet Union broke off relations after the six-day war

Israel sends first envoy to Moscow in 23 years

From MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

THE blue and white Israeli flag was raised in Moscow yesterday to mark the official opening of an Israeli consulate after a break of 23 years. This is the first time that Israel has had a formal diplomatic presence in the Soviet Union since the Kremlin broke off relations in 1967. Israeli affairs had been looked after by the Dutch embassy.

After a short ceremony addressed in Russian and Hebrew by Arieh Levin, the consul general, there was singing and dancing in the flower-strewn courtyard. A small crowd, mostly of visa applicants, watched from the gate, but there were no protests.

Although the mood was optimistic, there are still unresolved problems. The Israeli airline, El Al, is due to begin regular direct flights to Moscow this month but, according to Mr Levin, they will be used only by business travellers and tourists. Moscow will not allow Jewish emigrants to travel on them unless the Israeli government gives a formal undertaking not to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied territories.

Mr Levin said he saw no need for such a statement. The Israeli government, he said, had already sent the Soviet government a note on the subject in the autumn.

The delay in commencing direct flights, which were agreed on in principle at a meeting between the Israeli

and Soviet foreign ministers in September, is believed to reflect pressure from Arab states concerned about the scale of Soviet emigration to Israel. More than 200,000 emigrated last year, and this year the number is expected to double.

A second problem in Israeli-Soviet relations concerns Soviet Jews refused permission to emigrate. Mr Levin said several "refuseniks" were still prevented from leaving because of their alleged past access to state secrets.

Jewish groups hope the planned new Soviet entry and exit law will restrict to five years the time anyone can be prevented from leaving on security grounds, but this is known to be a point of contention between Soviet legislators and the military and KGB authorities.

At a press conference, Mr Levin made it clear that the opening of the consulate was a diplomatic compromise that would allow business to be conducted without the resumption of full diplomatic relations.

He said: "We could have had full diplomatic relations, but I understand that the Soviet government is reluctant and has a little difficulty. We have no difficulty. We are preparing for full diplomatic relations. The Soviet side broke relations in 1967 for reasons which seem strange and not totally acceptable, but all that is in the past." He

declined to predict when full relations might be resumed.

● JERUSALEM: Israeli officials warmly welcomed the consulate opening, and said Soviet demands for a guarantee that Soviet immigrants would not be settled in the occupied territories "should present no difficulties" (Richard Owen writes). "We have given the Russians such assurances already," said Yossi Olmert, head of the government press office.

"The Arab side may still complain, but at the end of the day the Russians know perfectly well what our policy is, namely that we do not send immigrants to the territories."

In fact, fewer than 1 per cent of Soviet Jewish immigrants have settled in the territories, not least because of the hardships involved. But there are fears that pressures such as the shortage of jobs and housing in Israel proper will force more Soviet Jews to find accommodation in the West Bank. Many new arrivals have settled in east Jerusalem, annexed by Israel but regarded internationally as occupied land.

Deputy's son killed in Vilnius

Moscow — The son of Romualdas Ozolas, the deputy prime minister of Lithuania, has died of injuries suffered in a New Year's day fight with people who had been drinking. Eta, the Lithuanian news agency, reported yesterday. Two people had been arrested, police said.

Marjona Misukonis, the Lithuanian interior minister, said the body of Dijas Ozolas, aged 20, had been found in an orchard near Vilnius on New Year's day.

Police said the fight had no political motive or connections to Mr Ozolas's father. "The assailants did not know his name or nationality. They came across him accidentally," (AP)

● BERLIN: Oleg Gordievsky, a KGB officer who spied for Britain before escaping to the West in 1985, said the Kremlin still had about 700 spies in Germany.

He told the *Berliner Zeitung* that the main centres for Soviet agents were in Bonn, Cologne, Munich, Hamburg and both halves of the once-divided Berlin. (Reuters)

Janet Daley, page 10

Hungary bids for Berlin arsenal

From ASSOCIATED PRESS IN BUDAPEST

HUNGARY, attempting to meet its defence needs independently of Moscow for the first time in decades, wants to buy much of the arsenal of former East Germany, according to defence ministry officials.

German officials acknowledged on Wednesday that Hungary had expressed interest in the weaponry, but said no decision had been made. They said Czechoslovakia and Poland also have expressed interest in purchasing some of the armaments.

The interest in the weapons comes as some leading Hungarian military figures voice concern about tensions with neighbouring countries freed from the discipline of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact.

The former East German army was the best-equipped of the Kremlin's military allies, partly because it was considered the most loyal. Other pact allies had to make do with outdated weaponry.

Gyorgy Keleti, the defence ministry spokesman, said Budapest asked Bonn for the weapons in September, one month before the two Germanies were united. He was

optimistic that Hungary will be able to buy the arms. Mr Keleti said the Hungarians wanted 360 T72 tanks, 350 infantry fighting vehicles, more than 1,000 lorries, 72 122mm artillery pieces, 50,000 AK-47 rifles, 50 million rounds of ammunition, 100,000 anti-tank guided missiles and 200,000 grenades.

Officials in Bonn gave no details on the Hungarian offer. They suggested that selling the weaponry was so sensitive that parliament may have to decide which, if any, of the countries would get them. They said without elaboration that Czechoslovakia and Poland also sought to purchase some of the weapons.

Mr Keleti did not say how much Hungary was prepared to pay. He said last week that he believed Hungary would be able to buy the weapons cheaply, banking on "German appreciation for Hungary's role in making reunification possible". In 1989, Hungary opened its border to the west for East Germans fleeing their country. The decision contributed to the end of communist rule in East Germany and led to German unification.

Corsican holiday homes bombed

Ajaccio — Corsican separatist guerrillas blew up dozens of holiday homes yesterday in what they called an attack on property speculators on the French Mediterranean island.

The bombings, the worst in two years, came only hours before President Mitterrand was due to meet his inner cabinet to discuss a surge of violence on the island. A splinter group of the separatist National Front for the Liberation of Corsica claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Thirty holiday homes were destroyed in Ajaccio and 11 in Porto-Vecchio. A three-floor block of flats under construction collapsed in a big blast in Sagone, and a bomb destroyed a bar and damaged a restaurant and a bookshop in Ajaccio. There were no reports of casualties. (Reuters)

Mugabe plea

Harare — President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has said he hopes Britain will continue to help his government acquire land from large-scale white commercial farmers. He told *The Herald* newspaper that his government did not have enough resources to acquire the land needed to resettle thousands of landless communal farmers. Commercial farmers own about 30 per cent of Zimbabwe's land. (AFP)

Squatters moved

Berlin — Police cleared three illegally occupied houses in an east Berlin area where a similar raid sparked protracted riots last November. A police spokesman said there were no incidents when 200 officers moved in on the working class district of Friedrichshain and evicted the squatters. (Reuters)

New presidency

Singapore — The parliament of Singapore voted to change the way that the country is governed by replacing the ceremonial post of president with an elected office. The vote was 75-1 in favour of a bill to amend the constitution. Chiam See Tong, an opposition MP, cast the only vote against. (AP)

Cocaine killings

Bogotá — Colombian cocaine barons murdered four police secret agents in Medellín, police said, in what may signal the resumption of the drug traffickers' war against the government. The campaign of bombings and assassinations all but ended last July after 16 months and one drug baron has surrendered. (AP)

Hounded out

Vienna — Austrian postmen, fed up with ripped trousers and injured legs from encounters with fierce dogs, will no longer deliver mail to owners who fail to restrain their pets, a post office official said. More than 230 attacks were reported in 1989. Figures for 1990 were expected to be as high. (Reuters)

Prague reforms opposed

From ASSOCIATED PRESS IN PRAGUE

REFORMS designed to redraw Czechoslovakia's economy along capitalist lines were criticised by a key opposition party yesterday.

The Christian Democrats, the country's third-largest party and particularly strong in the Slovak republic, sharply attacked changes which began on January 1, in their party daily *Lidove Demokracie*.

"The main shortcoming of the reform is (the assumption) that large-scale price liberalisation and a rapid opening to the world's economies will get us soon into a functioning market system," the paper said.

The reforms, based on sweeping privatisation, price decontrol and budget austerity, were penned by Vaclav Klaus, finance minister, and have been sanctioned by the International Monetary Fund.

But Mr Klaus's package, often compared with the "shock therapy" implemented by Leszek Balcerowicz, Poland's finance minister, is

worrying many Czechoslovaks who are used to fixed prices and job security under the old communist system. The Prague package is expected to increase unemployment and push inflation as high as 50 per cent in 1991.

Mr Klaus devalued the national currency three times last year to help increase exports, while price decontrol



Klaus: package seen as shock therapy

aimed at making Czechoslovakia's market more compatible with the West.

Lidove Demokracie said that devaluation and price liberalisation could force between 60 and 70 per cent of Czechoslovak industry into bankruptcy or into the arms of foreign capital.

A report by a Christian Democrat commission of economic experts also criticised the government for delays in privatisation and legislative bottlenecks that are hindering foreign investors.

Mr Klaus's reforms, drafted before the Civic Forum and its Slovak sister organisation, Public Against Violence, won elections in June, have been delayed by lengthy parliamentary debate and disputes between federal authorities and the Czech and Slovak republics.

Lidove Demokracie said the Christian Democratic party would prepare a comprehensive plan for economic reform and present it to voters.

Fears of Vesuvius eruption

From PAUL BOMPARD IN ROME

VESUVIUS, Europe's most famous volcano which dominates the Bay of Naples, is not dormant and could erupt again, threatening the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

The warning has been issued by the Italian civil defence ministry and the Vesuvian observatory, which has been monitoring the volcano for the past 150 years. "Sooner or later there will be an eruption," said Professor Giuseppe Luongo, of the observatory. "Vesuvius is not completely dormant, it is dozing. Our instruments indicate that there is constant

underground activity." According to the civil defence authorities, who are calling for the immediate creation of a contingency plan, a serious eruption could demand the evacuation of up to 500,000 people in the built-up areas around Vesuvius and indirectly affect another three million. One idea is to take people off the mainland in ferries when the first signs of an eruption are felt.

Vesuvius's most famous eruption caused the destruction of Pompeii in 79 AD. It last erupted in 1944, severely damaging nearby villages and the countryside. Since then, tens of thousands of houses have been built, the majority of them without planning permission, close to the volcano, as if no danger existed.

Professor Luongo said: "This lack of awareness is demonstrated by the fact that blocks of flats are still being built on the slopes of Vesuvius, only a few hundred metres from the crater. We must not create needless panic, but we must learn to live with an active volcano, one of those with the highest eruption risks in the world... we are living under a Damocles' sword."

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FAMOUS NAME SALE

Elite units reinforce Israel's borders as UN deadline nears

ISRAEL is bracing itself not only for possible war with Baghdad but also for destabilisation on its borders as the January 15 deadline for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait nears. Officials anticipate disruption from Lebanon to Jordan in the event of a Middle East conflagration.

In southern Lebanon, Israeli officials said they were prepared for stepped-up attacks on Israel's northern border by Palestinian and Muslim Shia groups, with Syria taking advantage of the chaos to extend its hold on Lebanon and weaken Israeli control in southern Lebanon. Officials are also concerned about developments in Jordan, where the inclusion of five members of the Muslim Brotherhood in the re-

shuffled cabinet has coincided with Jordanian tank and troop movements on the Israeli frontier. Yesterday, there were reports that Israeli troops in the Jordan valley had been reinforced by elite units and air defences. "If war breaks out, Israel must be alert on all borders," one official said.

At Marjayoun, General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanon Army (SLA), the predominantly Christian Arab force backed by Israel, said that if the Gulf confrontation ended in a "military solution" and the United States won the war, as seemed likely, this would lead to greater pressure on Israel and its allies as Washington and its Arab partners tried to reach a postwar settlement.

Israeli officials anticipate disruption of their borders from Jordan to Lebanon in the event of hostilities in the Gulf. Richard Owen reports from Marjayoun

"If the Middle East map can be redrawn in the Gulf, an area rich in oil, it can be even more easily redrawn in areas which have less power and significance for the West," General Lahd said. Officials said they feared that a Middle East peace conference could involve both the Palestinian question and an attempt to unify Lebanon under Syrian hegemony.

General Lahd, whose 2,700 troops patrol the rock-strewn hillsides of southern Lebanon with the help of the Israeli army, said there had been a recent marked increase in attempts by Arab gunmen to infiltrate the "security zone", the 350-square-mile buffer zone set up by Israel and the SLA in 1985 to prevent attacks on Israel's northern border. He insisted, however, that the SLA, which is equipped, trained and financed by Israel, could cope.

Eight Israeli soldiers have died in the security zone in the past two months. Disbanded Muslim militias have moved south from Beirut to harass Israel and SLA forces since the Syrian-backed Lebanese government of President Hrawi drove General Michel Aoun, the Christian leader, out of east Beirut in October and formulated a pacification plan. Israeli army officers, accompanying reporters on a tour of defences near the ruined crusader castle of Beaufort, said Israel would only withdraw from southern Lebanon if there were "a strong central Lebanese government in which Israel can believe and which provides real border security".

General Lahd, aged 61, said he saw no comparison between Israel's presence in southern Lebanon and Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. He insisted that Syria would never succeed in including southern Lebanon in its "zone of hegemony" even if it emerged as one of the victors in a war with Iraq. He said General Aoun had been backed only by France, which was weak militarily, and by the Pope, who had no troops, "whereas I have Israel".

The Israeli *Hadashot* newspaper, commenting on tensions with Jordan, said that King Hussein was playing with fire by staging shows of military strength. **JERUSALEM:** The first United Nations envoy to visit Israel and the occupied territories since 17 Palestinians were shot dead by Israeli security forces here last October, yesterday held "a frank exchange of views" with David Levy, the Israeli foreign minister, before having his afternoon schedule interrupted by fresh disturbances in the Gaza Strip (Paul Adams writes).

Washington's suspicions about Europe surface again

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE timing of yesterday's White House offer of talks with Iraq was no accident.

On the day Congress reconvened, it was designed not just to head off Capitol Hill's demands that President Bush should go the extra mile to avert war, but also to pre-empt what one official called "an explosion of freelance peace initiatives" before January 15. The administration will not say so publicly, but it would include the proposed European Community initiatives in that category.

Ostensibly, the administration welcomes all diplomatic efforts to achieve a peaceful solution. Privately it fears that talks conducted by anyone other than itself will lead to unacceptable compromises with Iraq, and that goes for most European as well as Arab nations.

The French, whose President Mitterrand, has openly mused about possible settlements and this week sent a senior aide to Baghdad, are the most suspect of all. Mr Bush telephoned Mitterrand and discussed that trip.

American concern about the possible EC initiative was underscored on Wednesday when Robert Kimmitt, under secretary for political affairs at the State Department, summoned the ambassadors of Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands — the past, present and future EC presidents — to emphasise that there must be

no divergence from the terms of the 12 UN resolutions.

"It all depends how it turns out," one official said this week of the European initiative. "If people are trying to settle things with partial solutions, then it is going to be a problem."

The American position reflects deep ambivalence towards Europe. On the one hand, the government wants a strong Europe, capable of sharing the burden of world leadership; but simultaneously it recoils from any challenge to its own supremacy and freedom of action.

Congressional leaders, supported by countless opinion polls, have incessantly decried the relatively paltry economic and military contributions of Germany and other oil-dependent European nations (though few were consulted about the initial dispatch of American troops). A *USA Today* poll yesterday indicated that 79 per cent of Americans believe that their troops should not fight in the Gulf unless "substantial" numbers of allied troops fight alongside them.

At the same time, Americans have taken an unmistakable pride in the fact that their superpower status has been reaffirmed.

"This crisis really exposed the hollowiness of European pretensions," Bernard Lewis, a Princeton University historian, told *The Washington Post* soon after the confrontation began. "Here was a major crisis that affected Europe far more than the US, since the Europeans are far more dependent on Persian Gulf oil. But nevertheless the great new European colossus that we have been hearing about has either been passive for responding to the American initiative and not launching anything of its own."

The Wall Street Journal said that "all the talk about Japan or Germany being the new number one has faded quickly. The Iraq crisis shows that the US is the only true superpower." *The New York Times* said that "the obituaries [for America] were ... premature."

The administration expects that a more united, cohesive Europe will emerge in the wake of the Gulf confrontation, and there are moves to develop common EC defence and security structures, but in the meantime America's fading "special relationship" with Britain has been given an extra lease of life.

In its readiness to use force and its implacable opposition to partial solutions, Britain has again proved to be Washington's most dependable ally.

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Fitzwater: reading the president's statement

Bush offers 'to go the extra mile'

Washington — This is part of President Bush's statement offering to hold talks with Iraq, read yesterday by Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman.

More than a month ago, on November 30, I proposed that Iraqi foreign minister (Tariq) Aziz travel to Washington to meet with me late in the week of December 10, to be followed ... by a trip to Baghdad by Secretary of State James Baker. I did so "to go the extra mile for peace".

While I offered 15 days during which Secretary Baker was prepared to travel to Baghdad, including Christmas, Saddam Hussein showed himself to be more interested in manipulating my offer to his advantage than in a serious response. He was not too busy to see on short notice a wide range of individuals ... but he was too busy to find even a few hours to meet with the Secretary of State of the United States ...

Secretary Baker is departing on January 6 for several days of close consultations with coalition partners ... While I am not prepared to repeat my previous offer, rejected by Saddam Hussein, I am ready to make one last attempt to go the extra mile for peace. I have therefore offered ... to have Secretary Baker meet with Iraqi foreign minister Aziz in Switzerland during the period January 7-9 ... This offer is being made subject to the same conditions as my previous attempt: no negotiations, no compromises, no attempts at face-saving and no rewards for aggression. What there will be if Iraq accepts this offer is, simply and importantly, an opportunity to resolve this crisis peacefully. (Reuter)



Doctor at sea: Surgeon Lieutenant Kathy Blaydes, the Royal Navy's first woman doctor to serve on board ship, who set sail for the Gulf yesterday. Lieutenant Blaydes, aged 28, is among the 125-strong crew of the Devonport-based survey ship HMS Hecla. Lieutenant Blaydes, who has been in the Royal Navy for three years and has served on the Hecla for only two months, said she was nervous but

happy to be going. "It's my first sea-going appointment, but it's exciting to be part of a ship and such a good team," she said. Changes have been made to HMS Hecla to prepare it for possible action in the Gulf, including the fitting of a Lynx helicopter landing pad. Miss Blaydes's fiancé is a Portland-based Lynx pilot. There is also a "sanctuary" — which is a small sealed unit designed for use in the event

of chemical warfare. The ship's captain, Commander Hugh May, says that the vessel is ready for anything. "I am apprehensive to a certain degree, but I have the greatest confidence in the ship's company," he said. The Hecla is replacing HMS Herald as the command and support centre for the five Royal Navy minesweepers which are already stationed in the Gulf.

EC adamant on Iraqi pull-out

FROM MICHAEL BINYON IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN Community foreign ministers, holding a crucial meeting in Luxembourg this afternoon, will insist that Iraq withdraws from Kuwait as a precondition to Gulf conflict talks.

"There will be no negotiations. There will be a contact with a message," Jacques Poos, the Luxembourg foreign minister, said yesterday.

"Iraq must leave Kuwait, totally and unconditionally, before the (January 15) date set out in the United Nations resolution and full sovereignty must be restored to Kuwait," said Mr Poos, who may be given a mandate to open talks with Iraq after today's meeting. "Only after this is achieved will we look at how to handle the post-crisis situation."

President Bush's announcement that James Baker, the US Secretary of State, was ready to meet Tariq Aziz, his Iraqi counterpart, in Switzerland, makes it easier for the EC to reaffirm its solidarity with Washington.

Iraq, however, issued a warning yesterday that Baghdad was not ready to receive an EC envoy unless he was ready to negotiate. Zaid Haidar, the Iraqi ambassador to the EC, urged the foreign ministers to launch a separate peace initiative, and said that an EC mission to Baghdad could be arranged as soon as possible.

Such a mission, headed by Mr Poos, would be received by President Saddam Hussein. Mr Haidar

said. But he criticised Mr Poos for saying that he would not negotiate with Baghdad. He urged the EC instead to put pressure on America to achieve an overall Middle East settlement, and implement UN resolutions on Palestine. Iraq would not be satisfied with promises to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict after a withdrawal from Kuwait because there was no guarantee that such a promise would be honoured.

Today's meeting comes as public opinion is hardening in some EC countries against force in the Gulf. An opinion poll in Belgium yesterday showed that only 36 per cent of Belgians favoured the use of force against Iraq, compared with 60 per cent in September. About 54 per cent oppose a military solution. The poll also found that 87 per cent of those asked said the West should continue to negotiate to avert war.

The Belgian cabinet has already let it be known that it wanted to have nothing to do with preparations for war. Wilfried Martens, the prime minister, said on Wednesday that Brussels had turned down a request from Britain for the purchase of Belgian ammunition.

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the German foreign minister, is also pressing for greater efforts to avert war as German public opinion voices increasing concern at the lack of direct talks between Washington and Baghdad.

Doubts persist on French solidarity

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS AND ANNE MCELVOY IN BONN

PRESIDENT Mitterrand declared before Christmas that France was prepared for war if Iraq failed to withdraw from Kuwait. Warning President Saddam Hussein that he risked "provoking the irreparable", Mitterrand emphasised that Paris sought peace, but would not flinch from the consequences of the application and triumph of legitimacy.

The fighting talk was supported by the dispatch of extra French forces to the Saudi desert, including unmistakably offensive units such as heavy battle tanks and more attack helicopters. Mitterrand emphasised that his country staunchly supported the United Nations and European Community strategy in the Gulf, possibly in response to speculation that Iraq saw France, its former friend,

as a weak link in the enemy alliance. Yet doubts persist — notably in Britain and the United States — about the strength of commitment in Paris. It arises not simply from opinion polls that show up to 60 per cent of the French turning against war. The real problem is the confusing signals that Mitterrand and his inner circle have been emitting along with reaffirmations of French solidarity.

Critics claim the president's speech to the UN General Assembly last September — apparently offering Iraq a face-saving plan linking retreat from Kuwait to progress on a broader Middle East peace settlement — raised the possibility of Paris taking a separate track from its allies.

Uncertainty about French policy was strengthened by the overt hostility to military involvement of Jean-Pierre Chevènement, the defence minister. The release of all French hostages from Iraq last October aroused suspicions that a deal had been struck, despite flat denials by Paris.

With less than a fortnight until the UN ultimatum to President Saddam expires, French intentions still worry its allies. Mitterrand's message to the nation on New Year's eve can have done little to help.

Although the president re-emphasised France's determination to "apply UN decisions", even if it meant fighting, he also underlined his belief that any peace settlement with Iraq had to contain the seeds of a wider initiative on other festering Middle East problems, such as the Palestinian issue.

In the circumstances, the unexpected departure to Baghdad on Wednesday of one of Mitterrand's trusted political followers, Michel Vauzelle — head of the National Assembly's foreign affairs commission — was seen by some as a semi-official French initiative outside the scope of European Community strategy.

For all the uncertainty, however, it is barely conceivable that French forces in Saudi Arabia would not be committed should war break out after January 15. As the EC foreign ministers sit down today in Luxembourg for their emergency meeting on the Community's policy in the Gulf, Germany's Hans-Dietrich Genscher faces the sharpest post-unification test yet of his ability to juggle popularity at home with acceptability to his Nato allies.

Germany will push more openly than previously for an avoidance of conflict as America and Britain intensify preparations for war, for which there is little enthusiasm among the German public, who have been outraged by the deployment of jet fighters in Turkey.



Mitterrand: conflict in signals over readiness for war

Reluctant Mubarak at Libya summit

Nicosia — Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, yesterday hosted a summit with President Assad of Syria, President Mubarak of Egypt and Omar Hasan al-Bashir, the Sudanese military leader, aimed at achieving a unified Arab stand (Michael Theodorou writes).

It was believed that the reluctant Syrian and Egyptian leaders decided to attend the meeting in Nicosia after they received advance notice that James Baker, the US Secretary of State, would offer to hold direct talks with Tariq Aziz, his Iraqi counterpart, in Switzerland next week.

The four leaders were not expected to launch any substantial new initiative. "We want to pool our efforts and unify our positions to serve the future of the Arab nation," Colonel Gaddafi said, adding that Iraq's unpredictability gave him reason to hope that Baghdad would announce a surprise initiative to avert war.

Leaders on both sides of the Arab divide are united in their desire for peace, but have said that a solution can be achieved only by the international community. Syria and Egypt have sent troops and armour to the Gulf and have channels to Washington, while Libya and Sudan, which have officially condemned the invasion of Kuwait, remain in contact with Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo insist on a total Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, while Khartoum and Tripoli back a compromise.

Tank accident kills soldier

A British soldier has been crushed to death while helping to load tanks on to a transporter in the Gulf. Corporal Alan Bolam, aged 30, of the Tank Transport Regiment, was killed on New Year's eve at a military base in the Saudi desert north west of Dhahran. He leaves a widow, Lesley, and three children, who are staying at Mrs Bolam's parents' home in Wallsend, Tyne and Wear. Corporal Bolam had been stationed in Germany.

Exile challenge

Beirut — Iraqi opponents of President Saddam Hussein are to form a government-in-exile, dedicated to overthrowing 23 years of Baath party rule in Baghdad, Abu Maytham al-Saghir, a pro-Iranian opposition leader, said. The coalition would include Muslim fundamentalists, Kurds, communists, socialists and nationalists. (Reuter)

North Sea alert

Oslo — Oil firms in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea have tightened security against guerrilla attacks because of the Gulf confrontation. "We've had no indication that the risk has changed, but the petroleum industry has updated its existing plans," said Per Saltre, of the state-funded Norwegian Petroleum Directorate. (Reuter)

Business boost

The Welsh drug company, Penn Pharmaceuticals of Tredegar, is extending its premises and increasing its workforce to 100 in response to the Gulf conflict. The company specialises in producing antidotes to the chemical weapons in Iraq's possession. It needs the extra staff to provide sufficient drugs to meet the needs of British troops in Saudi Arabia.

Oilfield security

Dhahran — Saudi Arabia has increased security at oilfields, to counter any possible sabotage attempts by Iraqis. More guards, hundreds of security gates and alarms have been installed at the Dhahran headquarters of the Saudi Aramco oil company. (Reuter)

Swimmers' choice

Perth — The International Swimming Federation has rejected a request from Kuwait to expel Iraq. Its president, Mustapha Larbaoui, told a press conference here that Iraq had not breached any rules banning political, religious and racial discrimination. (Reuter)

Californians only willing to buy time

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN SAN DIEGO

SOUTHERN Californians came back to work after the holiday to find silent phones, cautious customers and a rare atmosphere of pleasure postponed. The fortnight running up to the January 15 UN deadline has already been dubbed here "the great anti-Christmas".

Outside Bob Baker's Chevrolet dealership in San Diego, Jack Mann looked at a new environment-friendly GEO saloon. He had the money to buy it but, at least until January 16, he decided to hang on to his cash. "I'm superstitious," he said, "and I just don't know what's going to happen."

Some car salesmen see business falling almost to zero until the deadline is passed. The threat of war does not fill minds here, it seems rather to empty them.

The navy wives of San Diego held a patriotic fireworks

celebration for their absent husbands at New Year, cheering loudly when a sailor, recently returned from the Gulf, called for President Saddam "to get the licking he deserved".

On the other side, outside the federal government offices in Westwood, Los Angeles, a group of anti-war protesters held soulful weekly vigils, attempting to recreate the spirit of the Vietnam protests.

The bulk of the population is of neither party. They back the president — for now — and wait. The political temperature here is low — partly because it always is on foreign affairs.

"Southern California played almost no part in the anti-Vietnam movement," says Ronald Brownstein, author of a new book on Hollywood's links with Washington, "and so far it is playing almost no part now".

Both Californian senators, the

locally-elected politicians who have the chief responsibility in foreign policy, have other problems on their minds. Pete Wilson is preparing to take up his new job as California governor and Alan Cranston is fighting cancer of the prostate and campaign corruption charges. Much of the liberal community in Southern California is Jewish or has strong emotional ties to Israel. This group has also remained quiet.

California's perennial worry is crime and its most pressing concern is new taxes on cars and boats. Leonard Fagelman's Los Angeles Filo-fax store has not sold a single one of its \$1,900 (£1,000) abductor-bound models this holiday.

None the less, questions raised by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait are debated in schools, in contrast to the secrecy of the early days of the Vietnam build-up.

But the call-up of reserves after a long period of peace has meant that many children have lost both parents to the Saudi desert. Teachers report widespread emotional disturbances. Task forces from military bases are touring schools to explain the body bags and biological weapons which are part of the new "educational programme".

It is the sad undertow to the Christmas holiday — and the media have taken up the story strongly. Although about 60 per cent of Californians back the use of force in the Gulf, the 40 per cent that do not make up a far higher proportion of the population than at the beginning of the Vietnam war. As the countdown continues, Californians have not faced the reality that war may soon begin and if it goes wrong, even the residents of Redondo Beach, La Jolla and San Diego may turn against it.

Fears grow of battle to the death as Somali ceasefire fails

By ANDREW LYCETT

PROSPECTS of a bloody Liberia-style battle to the death in Somalia increased yesterday as warring government and rebel forces failed to observe a ceasefire.

The United Somali Congress (USC), the main rebel group fighting to overthrow President Siad Barre, rejected all calls for a halt to hostilities. It claimed that, from early yesterday morning, it had been reinforcing its troops in the Somali capital, Mogadishu, where fierce fighting has been raging for six days.

Dr Abdullahi Hussein, a spokesman for the congress, said in Rome that President Siad Barre's call for a ceasefire was "designed to give him time to make reinforcements". USC insistence on this point threatens an Italian proposal to evacuate foreigners stranded in Mogadishu. Italy said yesterday that President Siad Barre had given it permission to proceed with plans to evacuate 470 Europeans still in the capital, but emphasised that this was dependent on a ceasefire being observed.

However, Dr Hussein dismissed President Siad Barre's agreement to the evacuation as "a ploy". He said: "We can only accept a ceasefire when President Siad Barre is out of his country or has been killed in his bunker." He added that

up to 15,000 more USC troops, armed with heavy weapons, were now arriving in the capital from central Somalia. Independent observers have put the number of USC forces in Mogadishu at 2,000. The Somali army nominally numbers 65,000, but it has been plagued by desertions, and was recently reported to be down to 10,000 men.

President Siad Barre's appeal for a ceasefire, first heard on Wednesday evening, had been preceded by similar calls from the European Community and President Mubarak of Egypt. The community had expressed concern for its citizens, mainly Italians, who are still in Mogadishu.

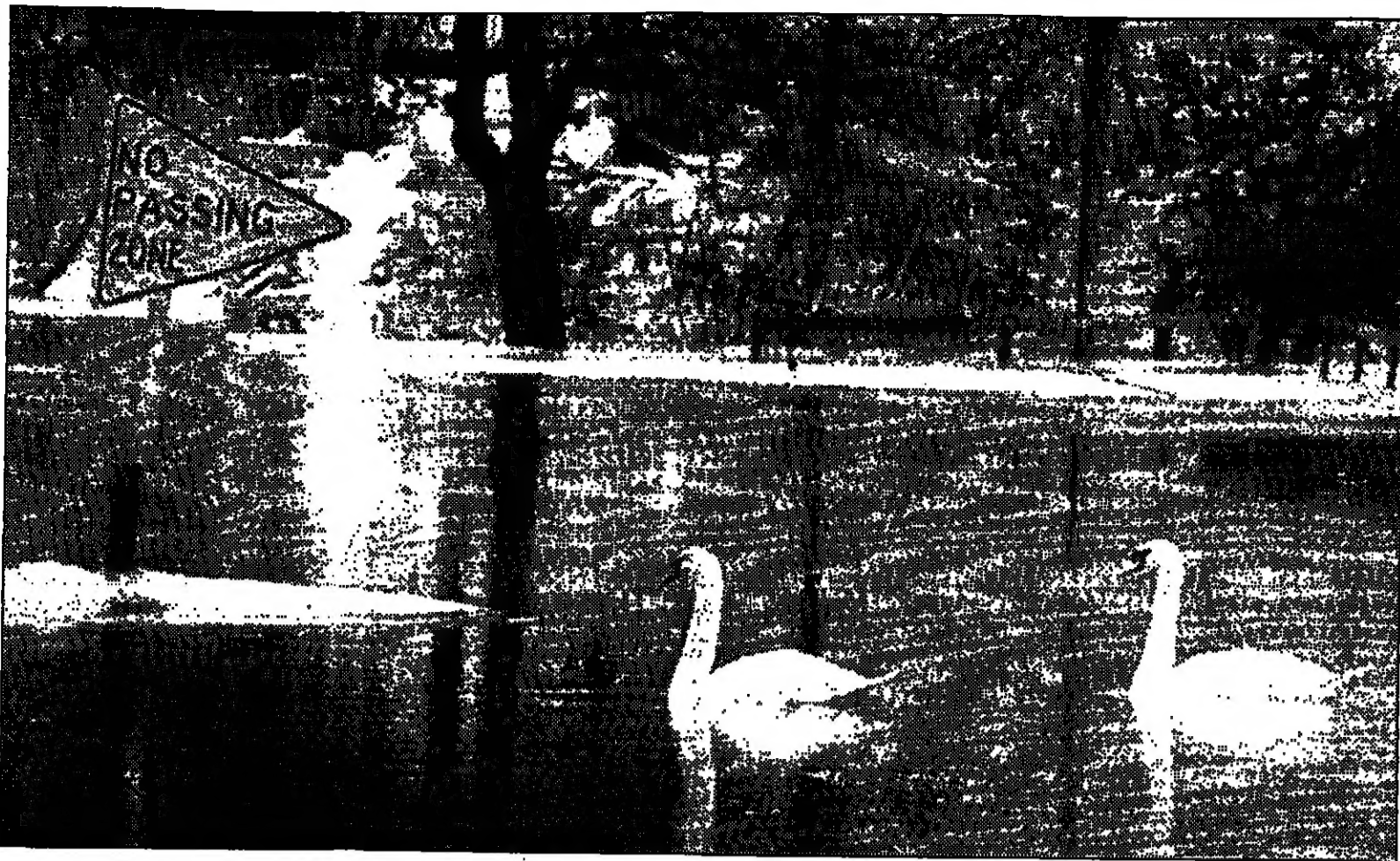
Italy has sent four military transport aircraft to Nairobi, where they have been awaiting clearance to fly to Mogadishu to evacuate all Europeans. It also has a warship off the Somali coast.

France also made contingency plans to evacuate its nationals. The frigate La Motte-Picquet, with two Lynx helicopters, was heading yesterday for Somalia from the Strait of Hormuz, where it had been helping to enforce the trade embargo against Iraq for the past two months.

In Mogadishu, President Siad Barre, who took power in a military coup in 1969, is still reported to be holed up in his

underground bunker to the south of the international airport. Reuter reported yesterday that USC rebels were advancing on the airport after having taken several areas of the city. Using accounts of witnesses, it said that the rebels held the ministry of health close to the president's official residence in the heart of the city, and the main post office, but the government appeared to be in control of the airport and the port. The rebels had taken buildings around the state radio station, it reported, but not the station itself.

The USC presents government willingness to accept a ceasefire as a sign of weakness. But evidence of government resolve came yesterday in reports that the prime minister, Muhammad Hawadle Madar, in a meeting with leaders of the local Hawiye community, had threatened to order the air force to bomb Mogadishu. Hawiyes, who live in the central region around the capital, are the main source of recruitment for the USC.



Swan lake: a pair of swans gliding along a road in Aroma Park, Illinois, as floods moved southwards across the adjacent American state of Indiana, where high water has forced thousands of people to leave their homes. To the east, the swollen Ohio River flooded low-lying areas along its West Virginia bank (Our

Foreign Staff writes). Ohio and Indiana have had one of their wettest weeks on record, which followed an exceptionally wet year. More than 3,000 people have been evacuated in Indiana since the flooding began on Saturday. Serious flooding was expected in southern parts of the state along the White

River, which reached its highest levels in 41 years. The Wabash River at Terre Haute was nearly 11ft above flood level. Indianapolis had 2.53ins of rain over the weekend, its greatest 24-hour rainfall for December this century, the weather service said. The Ohio River was expected to reach 8ft

above flood level at Point Pleasant, West Virginia. The basketball court of the University of Dayton in Ohio, by the Great Miami River, looked like a shallow swimming pool. Hospitals reported minor injuries and several cases of hypothermia. However, forecasters predicted dry weather over the next few days.

Salvador rebels test US resolve

From TOM GIBB IN SAN SALVADOR

LEFT-WING rebels killed three US servicemen when they shot down their helicopter in some of the heaviest fighting in the countryside for years.

The guerrillas have also begun to use anti-aircraft missiles, which the US fears will shift the balance in the rebels' favour. The increased fighting comes as US commitment to propping up the Salvadoran army is wavering for the first time in the 11-year civil war.

The US helicopter was shot down in the eastern part of the country on Wednesday. A judge identified the three dead servicemen, although they

have not been named.

Military sources say the guerrillas ambushed the helicopter, hitting it with machine-gun fire from the top of a small hill. In the past month they have shot down a Salvadoran army helicopter using the same tactic, and forced two others to crash land, killing a pilot. They have also shot down two ground support planes using the Soviet-made anti-aircraft missiles.

The faltering US commitment is also having an effect on the morale of US troops. "This thing isn't going to end. There is too much hatred and vengeance," one soldier said.

Since the war started, the US has poured almost \$4 billion (£2 billion) into El Salvador in an effort to stop rebels of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) taking power. Fifty-five US advisors are permanently based in the country, but with the end of the cold war and a domestic budget crisis, aid levels have fallen by more than a third in the past two years.

The rebels no longer seem the threat they were. In UN-sponsored peace talks they have offered to take part in elections and accept the present constitution in return for a demilitarisation of the country.

In October, the US congress, angered at army human rights abuses, withheld half next year's \$85 million military aid budget. President Bush could ask for the money to be restored if the rebels receive significant arms shipment from abroad.

Last week Sandinista army leaders in Nicaragua dismayed Mr Bush by admitting that their officers had defied orders and supplied the rebels with anti-aircraft missiles.

UN may act on Burma

From AFP IN BANGKOK

A UNITED Nations report on human rights in Burma is likely to prove an embarrassment for the country's ruling military junta, according to diplomats based in Rangoon, and could lead to UN sanctions being imposed.

The report, to be presented to the UN Human Rights Commission next month, is being prepared by Sadako Ogata, who was recently appointed the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

The junta closely restricted Mrs Ogata's movements during her stay and there were fears that the military managed to isolate her from pro-democracy supporters. According to diplomats reached by telephone, however, dissidents almost certainly gave her documents.

Deng tells party to focus on reform

From CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

DENG Xiaoping, the frail Chinese leader who is officially retired from politics, last week urged the central committee of the Chinese Communist party to stop arguing about whether reforms were socialist or capitalist and to get on with improving the economy.

Mr Deng, aged 86, said that reforms should be pursued

because only if the economy improved would socialism succeed: if the economy failed, then socialism would be in trouble.

His address to the plenum highlights his continued role in politics, but it is not clear whether his supremacy remains intact. The central committee communiqué of December 30 echoed Mr Deng's message, emphasising that economic success would have a "direct bearing on the rise or fall of China's socialist system".

Although Mr Deng did not attend the meeting, his words of guidance on the economy over the next ten years were relayed in a speech to the top party body.

According to reports, Mr Deng also urged the committee to examine policies of the last ten years. He had said that the next ten-year development plan should be drawn up in accordance with the lessons of the 1980s.



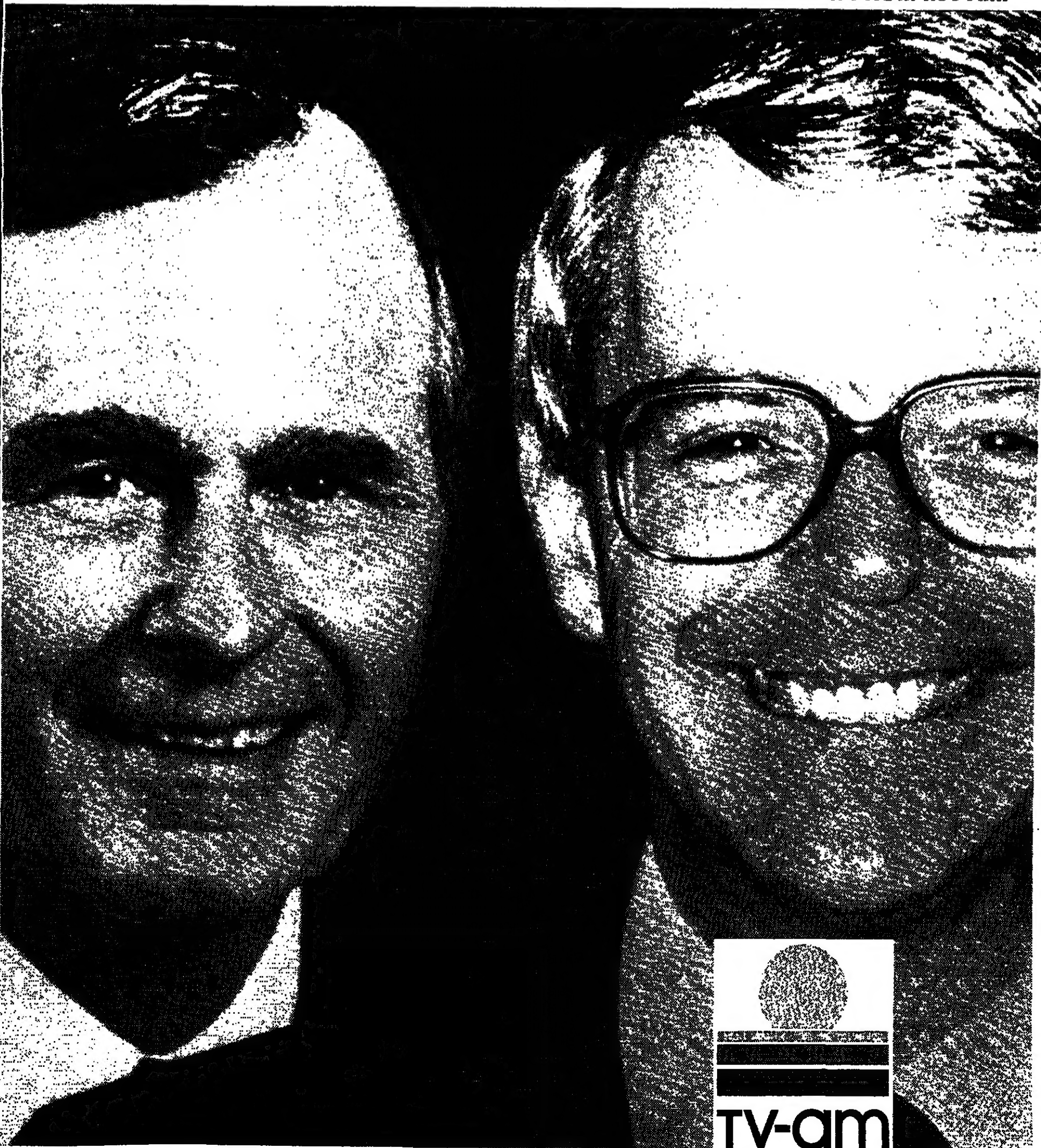
Deng: speech highlights his continuing influence

Bush, Major, Frost. A TV-am Summit. At a time of world crisis, the

President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain

discuss their hopes and fears for the New Year in two wide ranging

interviews with David Frost. BUSH AND MAJOR. FROST ON SUNDAY. FROM 7.30 AM.



Wake up to the facts.

Isms for every eventuality

Philip Howard

It is a schism in them to look at chiasm through a prism? You may well think that, editor. But I could not possibly comment. What does seem to be the case is that in modern journalism we are set about on every side by isms. First it was racism, which ousted sexism. Then came sexism. Then ageism. And now we are attacked for classism, heterosexism (prejudice in favour of heterosexuals), handicapism or disablism (discrimination against the disabled), smokeism (persecution of smokers), and numerous other isms.

What these new kind of isms have in common is the meaning of discrimination on the grounds of something. Now discrimination, in its true sense of adding up the pros and cons, and choosing, is a distinctive human activity. God created man a little above the other animals in our ability to discriminate more nicely between good and evil, and other fine distinctions. Discrimination was originally a good quality, when it was not done indiscriminately. Like elitism, to which it is related, it means to pick out the best. When you are awarding a scholarship, or choosing a choir, or selecting a cricket XI, it is sensible and right to discriminate.

Human nature being only a little above the other animals, the good qualities of discrimination and elitism have been blackened and perverted on grounds that have nothing to do with the case. The new isms describe discrimination for or against somebody on tribal or superstitious grounds that are irrelevant to the choice before us: class, or sex, or stripe of old school tie, or pretty face, or length of skirt, or age. In a perfect world, we should consider the candidates for a job, and discriminate in favour of the elite only in qualities useful for that job. Good at spelling, yes; colour of eyes, irrelevant. When humans are absolutely fair in such complex choices, pigs will fly. But the modern hatred of irrelevant unfairness is admirable. We have to proceed gradually, by making those who discriminate unfairly subject to an ism, feel ashamed of themselves. But, while we are at it, we might as well set up a flying school for pigs at Beachy Head.

These odd ism words have a curious history. They come originally from the tumultuous tribe of Greek verbs ending in -izo, which we at *The Times*, in our wisdom, have just decided to anglicise as -ise rather than -ize (apart from some irritating exceptions, such as capsize, which just looks wrong as capsize). You could describe this as zedism, or unfair discrimination against the whore-on-zed, the unnecessary letter.

Out of these verbs ending in

-izo, Greek made nouns of action, naming the process, the complete action, or its result: baptism, criticism, exorcism, nepotism, ostracism. Very early, in an ancient linguistic joke, the -ism ending was tacked on to the name of tribes or groups of people, to mean acting like or adopting the habits of a group of people. Antikismos in Greek, and Anticism in English, means siding with the Athenians, or acting in an Attic way, or the latest Attic fashion or idiom (a tendency of which the Athenians, who spent their time in nothing else but to tell or hear some new thing, approved). Modernism, siding with the hated and dangerous Persians, was treasonable, at any rate for patriotic Athenian democrats. Similarly Judaism and Christianity, the practice of Christians, Christianity. On this model, medieval Latin scholars formed paganism.

From these ism beginnings came a class of nouns describing conduct, habit, or character, and derived from a noun rather than an -izo verb: barbarism, despotism, heroism, blackguardism, patriotism, priggism. Then there is a group of isms to describe sects or systems, derived from the founder's or promoter's name, or the name of their subjects or objects: Arianism, Catholicism, Epicureanism, ritualism, Romanism, Socialism, Marxism, Fascism, positivism, modernism, postmodernism. Thence, by extension, come ism designations of doctrines, agonisms, altruism, nihilism, deism, egoism (to be distinguished from egotism), hedonism, polytheism, romanticism, universalism.

Then there is a group of isms denoting a trait or peculiarity, as it might be of language: archaism, barbarism, solecism, Graecism, Hellenism, Americanism, Anglicism, Gallicism, Scotticism, colloquialism. In this group there is a large squad of coinages and long-forgotten nonce-words.

Ism is such a versatile little ending in English that it made a word on its own. As early as 1680 we find: "He was the great Hieroglyphick of Jesuitism, Puritanism, Quakerism, and of all lams from Schism." The little word survived, so that in a recent issue of the much-lamented *Listener* we read: "Impressionism became the most successful ism in the history of art."

There is nothing new in the modern spate of isms. They are just the latest tide of one of the oldest processes in the written languages of Europe, inventing nouns ending with ism. In their specialised meaning, of trying to reduce unfairness on irrelevant grounds, they represent a humane, though ultimately utopian, trend.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

I have, I would submit, been a good Eurobribe. The 30 years which spared the squeak of Ted Heath's nib on the Rome Treaty and the summer reclassification of the carrot as a fruit never found my compliance wanting. As CAP and Chunnel and EMS, as this standardising imposition and that, inched slowly towards us — indeed centimetrically slowly towards us — like shy teenage fingers walking the back of a cinema seat towards the finally inescapable embrace, I have neither shrunk away nor slapped the ambitious hand. If Europe was to be turned into the nutritious ecopolitical omelette of the universalist's dream, rich, consistent, without lumps, then nationalist eggs had to be broken, and beaten into milk spilt without tears.

That it might also be a horse designed by a committee was not brought home to me until a few hours ago. A straw was laid across its back. The back broke. Prepared as ever to stand up and be counted, I stood up; but they would not count me.

What has happened is that Miss Tahiti has just become Miss France. She may well go on to become Miss Monde, and if she does, that is exactly what the French will call her, because they have never been slow to nick what suits them, and on this occasion, chauvinism and the Académie Française notwithstanding, they are clearly happy to accept that a Miss is good as a Mlle.

Now, let me quickly say that I have nothing whatever against Miss Tahiti. Not content to be almost two metres of tawny lissomness, topped by a coil of spun gold beneath which a brace of green headlamps burn with a feral intensity which would have had William Blake rethinking the whole principle of matchlessness, Miss Tahiti is also a good egg. She wishes to help world peace and understanding, and work among impoverished children, while at the same time becoming an international fashion model, which, you will readily concur, is a hell of a workload: you or I cannot quite see ourselves, can we, mincing down a spoliati catwalk in Mogadishu with a bairn under each arm and a set

of unassailable proposals for ending the civil war clenched in our perfect teeth?

My grouse is only that the crown that has been placed upon her lovely head rightfully belongs, in my opinion, upon the marginally lovelier head of Miss Littoral Nord. No, let me be specific: my grouse is that I was not allowed to express that opinion. The French would not let me vote for her.

Now, unlike British television, French television continues to transmit beauty contests in great number. It may be because their feminist lobby is either more or less frivolous than ours, it may simply be that their television is lousier, but whatever the reason, their little screens regularly tell us, as ours once did, with young women built mainly of leg, tripping back and forth with that curious rolling hobble which indicates that they are either trying to become Miss Quelquechose or making a final dash for the tape in the 20km walk.

Down here in France to celebrate, with my imminent brethren, the last New Year of our separatism. I switched on the box to find a line of tall girls loping past in identical bathing suits of the kind that allow continuity of thigh and armpit to be interrupted by only the merest thread. Behind them, a winking sign testified that they were going for the Miss France gown, while beneath them flashed the telephone number via which the viewers could vote, for that is how they do things here. The Bastille was not stormed in vain.

Miss Littoral Nord shimmered by. Though shorter than the rest, she displayed that foxy epiglotie which has cardinals glumly reviewing their careers. I rang up. Expecting a computer to record my choice I was surprised to find a human monitor interrogating me. My accent is not flawless. Yes, I said, I am English, but...

The monitor was desolated, but adamant. Not French, I could not vote. I put the phone down, and watched Tahiti come home by a nose. Don't talk to me about Europeanism, and stop dangling that carrot. We both know it's a vegetable.

Janet Daley sees an ominous difference between the declines of Romanov and Gorbachev Russia

Sans teeth, sans tsar, sans everything

The problem with attempting to learn lessons from history is that you can never be sure how closely events will follow the text. Parallels between the declining stages of Tsarist autocracy and the present Soviet crisis have an irresistible poetic irony. In its attempts at democratic restructuring, its vacillation between reform and reaction, and finally its ineffectual isolation, Mikhail Gorbachev's role resembles more and more the death throes of the Romanov dynasty.

The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 may have been part of a global movement against servitude (which also saw the freeing of slaves in the United States); not so much a sign of enlightened rule as a buckling under irresistible pressure. None the less, it marked the beginning of an inexorable dismantling of sovereign power. The logic of a country of free men was set in train and for the next 40 years Tsarist Russia struggled to contain its implications, swinging between further democratisation and conservative retrenchment.

Even in its last moments, the elective assembly, although hope-

lessly marginalised, continued to pass optimistic reforms. The Duma legislated for compulsory education to be established by 1922. That goal would probably have been achieved, but there had been real progress towards universal schooling. In 1896, there were 65,000 primary schools educating 3.5 million pupils. By 1915, the number had risen to 122,000 schools with more than 8 million pupils. Along with more widespread basic education, active literacy was expanding. Lenin wrote of the explosion of books and political periodicals after the 1905 uprising: "Popular [political] books became a market product."

Such principles as the (theoretical) independence of the judiciary and the right to trial by jury had been established in 1864. Russia was, by the end of the 19th century, attempting to superimpose many of the more sophisticated forms of Western democratic legality on a backward aristocratic society. The mismatch was fatal, as perhaps the mismatch will be between a market economy and an increasingly authoritarian Soviet central government.

Then, as now, reforms gave rise to further unrest. In 1858, 378 peasant disturbances were recorded, whereas in the four months surrounding the emancipation decree of 1861 the number was 1,340. Those who argued for repression then, as now, seemed to have evidence on their side that appeasement of popular dissatisfaction was the road to anarchy. Then, as now, the government infuriated both reformers and conservatives by offering apparent democratic concessions with one hand while retaining real power with the other, teasing disaffection into frustrated insurrection.

When, at the end, Tsar Nicholas attempted to put a stop to it all, to manipulate loyal supporters into crucial positions and put down the uprisings which swept across the country, it was too late. His government no longer held even the military power it had in 1905. Trotsky, in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, describes the Tsarist government as having become an irrelevance, long past the stage of controlling events (as is, increasingly, the government of

Mr Gorbachev). He quotes the minister of the interior as saying in 1915: "A government which has not behind it the confidence of... the army, nor the cities... nor the workers, not only cannot function, but cannot even exist — the thing is obviously absurd."

Why this recurrent paradox of a totalitarian regime seeming to bring about its own destruction by introducing gradual reform? When autocrats begin to dismantle their own absolutism, they seem to break the suspension of disbelief which is required to sustain the tyrannical absurdity. Reforms justify rebellion by making it morally credible, rather than mollifying it. But it is the dissimilarities between the fall of the Tsars and the present Soviet situation which are alarming. The Russians have created a form of totalitarianism that involves more subtle coercion than its predecessor. Political oppression which relies on physical force and economic subjugation is arguably less destructive of ultimate recovery than modern methods of mind control. The systematic educating out of all impulses toward individuality and

self-determination must be more damaging than no education at all. While in the 19th century emerging literacy could become a force for personal liberation, Russia now has a generation of people whose literacy has been manipulated in the interests of political conformity. Of course, there is well organised dissidence, but it must cope with a population trained to believe that the human capacities most necessary for recovery are criminal.

Where earlier forms of totalitarianism have created their own antidotes through opposition, the Soviet one may have succeeded in disabling any coherent replacement of itself. One senses in the Soviet debate an undercurrent of panic at the enormity of replacing fundamental attitudes. It is almost with relief that the authorities turn to the immediate practical difficulties. Intriguingly, Trotsky writes that the final, pathetic Duma pretended that "the question of power no longer interested it" and occupied itself with the problem of food supplies. Janet Daley's column will appear every Friday.

Thatcher's negative legacy

Ivor Crewe on research that suggests a decade of Tory reforms will not help the party's re-election chances

The Conservatives' overnight resurgence in the polls after Mrs Thatcher's departure — since reduced but still strong — prompts two very different verdicts on her electoral legacy. The more obvious is that her policy mistakes and style gradually turned her into an electoral liability. Immediately she was tossed off board, the Tory balloon rose. The less obvious interpretation is that for all her temporary unpopularity, 11 years of Thatcherism eroded Labour's long-term electoral base and created millions of new Conservatives. For why else did the balloon soar so high?

Mrs Thatcher's design was to inoculate the British against the socialist virus. A property-owning democracy and enterprise culture would replace the welfare society and dependency. The new Britain of self-employed, share-owning home-owners would kill socialism. Did she succeed?

The verdict of recent research is mixed but on balance unfavourable. Structural change has been limited, or has failed to help the Conservatives, or both. Take self-employment. Survey after survey reveals no more ardent Tory than the small businessman or shopkeeper. Turn a redundant steelworker into a self-employed builder and, after a brief transition period, a Labour chrysalis turns into a Tory butterfly.

There was a sharp rise in self-employment, forced by the manufacturing recession of the early Eighties. Having remained constant throughout the Seventies, the number of self-employed people rose from 1.9 million in 1979 to 3.1 million in 1989 — a much faster increase than in any comparable economy — but as a proportion of the workforce (let alone the electorate), the self-employed are a small minority of 12 per cent, leaving little scope for electoral gains. Moreover, there has been a counterbalancing burgeoning of the population reliant on income support and one-parent

benefits, from 3.4 million in 1981 to 5.6 million in 1988. Both "enterprise" and "dependency" communities have grown. In theory, popular capitalism should have offered more electoral advantages. Conservative strategists assumed that the heavily discounted sale of council houses and privatisation issues would be electorally profitable in the short term, through windfall gains, and in the long term, by giving owners a stake in the nation's wealth.

The social change was certainly marked. Between 1983 and 1987, shareholders in the electorate doubled, from 15 to 30 per cent, outnumbering trade unionists by three to two. Over the decade, more than 1.2 million council houses were sold, accelerating the gradual underlying trend to home-ownership. By 1987, only one voter in four owned neither a house nor shares.

The 1987 BBC/Gallup election-day survey suggests that, so far at least, the electoral dividends from privatisation, while not trivial, have been limited. True, in 1987, first-time share-owners voted Tory in much larger numbers (54 per cent) than Labour (27 per cent), but then they overwhelmingly preferred the Conservatives in 1983, before they bought shares (by 52 per cent to 30 per cent). The effect on the vote was modest: new share purchasers swung to the Conservatives by 2.5 points; non-purchasers swung to Labour by 3 points. Nor are there hints of long-term electoral benefits among new share-owners, underlying Conservative identification did not strengthen, nor did Labour identification weaken, by more than among those owning no shares.

The feeble impact of privatisation may reflect the small holdings of most share-owners. Housing, of course, represents a much larger investment for most voters. Here, the evidence of successful electoral engineering is stronger. The BBC/Gallup surveys for 1979, 1983 and 1987 show that between



1979 and 1983, the peak period for council-house sales, buyers swung by 17 percentage points to the Tories while non-buyers swung by only 3.5 points. Between 1983 and 1987, the difference was less marked: buyers swung by 0.5 points to the Tories, non-buyers by 5.5 points to Labour.

The limits to this modest piece of electoral engineering should be recognised, however. Council house sales have petered out: they were a one-off bonus to the Conservatives. And council-house

sales represented only part of the trend to home-ownership among manual workers; the Tory gains among other working-class home-owners have been slighter. Moreover, those early purchasers who stayed in their ex-council houses have swung back a little to Labour: in 1987 purchasers over the previous four years swung by 2.5 percentage points to the Conservatives, pre-1983 purchasers swung by 2.5 points to Labour. Gratitude had worn thin. By March 1990 it was disappear-

ing. With mortgages leaping, the Tories were no longer the home-owner's friend. And Labour, keeping quiet about reform of mortgage interest tax relief, seemed no longer his enemy. It had a 46 to 32 per cent lead among mortgage-payers and a slight lead even among outright owners.

The mortgage-rate problems for the Conservatives reflect the electoral downside of the structural changes of the Eighties. Between 1982 and 1989, outstanding debt excluding mortgages more than doubled, both in real terms and as a proportion of household expenditure. Since 1980 household saving (excluding life insurance) as a percentage of household disposable income has steadily declined, turned negative for the first time in 1985, and has since deteriorated further. The credit booms of 1982-3 and 1986-7, fuelled by lowering interest rates and the wealth illusion of rising house prices, swung more voters to the Tories than share issues or house buying. Thatcherism's electoral symbol should be the credit card, not the share certificate or title deed.

A decade ago, interest rates were of limited electoral importance because savers outnumbered debtors, and mortgages, being higher up the social scale, were stronger Conservatives. Mrs Thatcher's legacy is the placing of interest rates at the centre of the electoral stage. An economic model of the next election prepared by Essex University estimates that lower interest rates will do the Conservatives five times as much good as lower inflation. For every 1 percentage point drop in the inflation rate, at a constant level of interest rates, the Conservative vote is expected to rise a mere 0.2 points. But for every 1 point fall in interest rates, at a constant level of inflation, the Tory vote is expected to rise by 1 point. When Mrs Thatcher resisted entry into the exchange-rate mechanism for so long she was being electorally expedient. At just the point that interest rates have become electorally crucial, the government has reduced its freedom to influence them. The author is professor of government at Essex University.

Uncompleted story of O

John Major is about to become the subject of a rather more biographical than there seem to be facts to fill them. None, it appears, will be able to settle two questions: did the future prime minister leave school at the age of 16 without an O-level, and precisely how did he spend the six years before joining the Standard Chartered Bank?

Political folklore tells us that after leaving Rutlish Grammar School in Wimbledon, Major was unemployed for a time, failed to secure a job as a bus conductor, mixed some cement and avoided winter blizzards by keeping warm in a Brighton cinema. The details are sketchy: only from the time he joined the bank and came under the wing of Lord Barber does his life come into focus.

The first biography, edited by John Jenkins and already on sale, fails to fill the gaps, though it does refer to Major's brusqueness with a radio reporter when asked about his O-levels. Anthony Howard, the political commentator, says in reviewing the book that unless a proper biographical study is done "the only hope of getting the real John Major to stand up would appear to lie in the pages of a pop-up book."

Edward Pearce's *Newer out of the Way*, due in April, will not provide the answers. It starts with Major as a Lambeth councillor at the age of 24. Pearce does not apologise for glossing over the early years. "Everyone knows Major is a man of ability. He has proved it in other spheres, so his

scholastic achievements don't matter a brass button. He is educated in life."

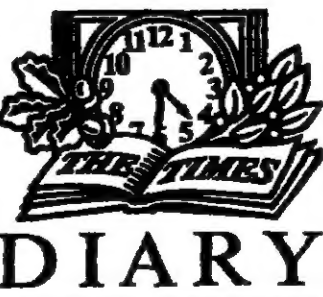
Bruce Anderson, like Pearce, will be interviewing the prime minister for *John Major: The Making of a Prime Minister*. "I don't know whether Major passed any O-levels. He was certainly never heading for a Balliol scholarship."

Lord Blake, historian of the Conservative party, does not understand the fascination with John Major's school days and adolescent adventures. "If biographers are that interested they can easily find out whether Major was top of the class. But who cares? It's what he is thinking today that is important."

I should think ordinary level about sums him up



His servants' voice
More than 12 months after the execution of Nicolas Ceausescu, tales of his bizarre behaviour continue to seep out of Romania. The latest concerns his treatment of a parrot that



was kept in considerable style in his palace at Snagov. When the proud owner was absent, servants passed the time in trying to teach the bird to insult Ceausescu. Despite intensive coaching, it remained stubbornly silent... until a day when the dictator chaired a meeting in his room. Proceedings were brought to a halt when the parrot flapped its wings and intoned: "Stupid Nico, stupid Nico." The next morning the parrot and cage had disappeared, never to be seen again.

Breaking the ice

The discovery by two British explorers of a previously uncharted lake in Tibet means that China will have to consider commissioning an updated map of the region. Tim Martin, who with William Holgate stumbled accidentally on the eight-mile frozen lake in the foothills of the Arka Tagh, Tibet's most northern mountains, hopes Peking will send an official survey team. But the Chinese may have a problem naming the lake. It has already been named by the adventurers, who call it Fifi Pakoll — in honour of Holgate's girlfriend.

Philippa, plus "koll", meaning lake in the local language.

The team came close to disaster in crossing the lake to avoid high ground. "Three of our camels fell through the ice," says Martin. "We were able to rescue them all, though one that was totally submerged came out with its coat stiff with ice. The expedition pressed on and eventually found a pass that took them to safety, also unrecorded on Chinese maps. This too was named: Po Trisha davan — "davan" being the local word for pass, and Patricia, naturally enough, Martin's fiancée.

Gowrie's glory

While Christie's chairman Lord Carrington is understandably proud of his company's new exhibition, *Patience Preserved*, showing art from country houses, it seems congratulations should be directed elsewhere. Art aficionados believe that much of the credit should go to Lord Gowrie, chairman of Christie's arch-rival, Sotheby's.

Many of the works on show at the exhibition at the St James's headquarters of Christie's were preserved for the nation by Lord Gowrie when he was arts minister. Some of the acclaim for the exhibition must go to Lord Gowrie, says Sir Hugh Leggatt, an art dealer who approached the peer when he was in government, seeking help to save the treasures of Nostell Priory, in Yorkshire. "I went to see Lord Gowrie in 1984 with Lord St Oswald, and made him aware of the problems facing the owners of Weston Park in Shropshire and Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire. It was thanks to

Lord Gowrie's help that the contents of those houses have stayed in their original stately settings. He got the Treasury to give £25 million."

And will Sotheby's be nodding in Lord Gowrie's direction in recognition of Leggatt's tribute? A large bouquet perhaps, or bottle of champagne? "We have no such plans," says Christie's firmly.

Name of the game

If Labour has been scoring political points lately on the sensitive issue of housing, the Tories may have only themselves to blame. Mail sent to Gerald Howarth, Tory MP for Cannock and Burnatwood, the PPS to Sir George Young, the new housing minister, has been inadvertently falling into the hands of George Howarth. Labour's housing spokesman, the problem arises when letters are addressed to Mr G. Howarth at the House of Commons without specifying the constituency or the full Christian name. And the worst offender? Tory Central Office.

All Smith Square staff have now been instructed to address letters in full to Gerald Howarth. It is sporting about the mix-ups, always forwarding the letters to Gerald with a compliments slip.

Tim Rice was lamenting the other day that he is now better known as a cricket enthusiast than as the co-author of musicals such as *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Evita* and *Chess*. "When I get into a taxi these days the driver invariably asks me about cricket," says Rice. "He usually starts 'Andrew, what do you think about...'"

SOCIAL NEWS

Birthdays today

Miss Grace Bumbry, opera and concert singer, 54; Miss Rosalie Crutchley, actress, 69; Mr Ian Cuthbertson, actor, 61; Mr Alan Dyer, chief constable, Bedfordshire, 57; Professor K.J. Hazcock, economist, 56; Sir Havelock Hudson, former chairman, Lloyd's, 72; Lieutenant-Commander Sir Ian Clark Hutchison, 88; Sir Leslie Joseph, former vice-chairman, Trusthouse Forte, 83; Professor B. Josephson, physicist, 51; Professor L.E. Layton, principal, Royal Veterinary College, 47; Mr John Lees, editor, *Evening Standard*, 61; the Hon Diana Magsill, civil servant, 61; Miss Margaret Marshall, opera and concert singer, 42; Mr Floyd Patterson, boxer, 56; the Earl of Ranfurly, 62; Mr T.J. Rix, publisher, 57; Sir Thomas Robson, chartered accountant, 95; the Rev Edward Rogers, former Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, 82; the Earl of Selkirk, QC, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Wilkins, 58.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, chronologist, Dublin, 1581; Giovanni Poncelet, composer, 1811, Italy, 1710; Jacob Grimm, philologist and folk-tale collector, Hanau, Germany, 1785; Louis Braille, inventor of the system bearing his name, Coupvray, France, 1809; Sir Isaac Pitman, inventor of a shorthand system, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, 1813; Augustus John, painter, Tenby, Dyfed, 1878. DEATHS: Sir John L. Liles, clergyman, pioneer of plant physiology, Teddington, Middlesex, 1961; Henri Bergson, philosopher, Nobel laureate, 1928, Paris, 1869; Camille Saint-Saëns, composer, 1921, Paris, 1865; T.S. Eliot, poet, Nobel laureate, 1992, London, 1898; Donald Campbell, killed, Coniston Water, Cumbria, when his speedboat crashed, 1967; Joy Adamson, naturalist and writer, 1980.

Luncheons

Prime Minister The Prime Minister was host yesterday at a luncheon held at 10 Downing Street in honour of King Hussein of Jordan. The other guests were: Sheriff Zeid bin Shaker, Mr Adam Abu Odeh, the Hon Douglas Hurd, MP, and Sir Charles Powell.

School news

King William's College, Isle of Man Spring term begins today. Michael Deering and Natasha Hookham are respectively head boy and head girl. The college confirmation service will be conducted by the Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man, on Sunday, February 24, at 10.30 am. The Adrian Hookham Seven Tournament for Preparatory Schools will be held on March 2 and 3. Term ends on March 28.

Judge retires

Judge Coles, QC, has retired from the circuit bench of the South Eastern Circuit. She was appointed a recorder in 1972, took silk in 1974 and became a circuit judge the following year.

Appointments

Mr George Wallace Farmer to be president of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal from January 3 in succession to Mr David Lewis Neve who is retiring.

OBITUARIES

WING COMMANDER DON KINGABY

Wing Commander Don Kingaby, DSO, AFC, DFM and two bars, Battle of Britain fighter pilot, died in Westfield, Massachusetts, on December 31 aged 70. He was born in London on January 7, 1920.



DON Kingaby had, as pilots go, a long career of continuous combat during the second world war and ended up as one of the RAF's top scoring aces. He was in operational squadrons from just before the onset of the Battle of Britain until after the D-Day landing and his tally of kills was spread throughout that period with a consistency that indicated remarkable resistance to battle weariness. Of his formidable tally of decorations, his three Distinguished Flying Medals are in themselves unique (and an indication of the relatively long time he spent as a non-commissioned officer) when combined with his later Distinguished Service Order, this was the reward of his leadership as a flight and then squadron commander in the years when the allied air forces were getting on top of the German defences. His Air Force Cross (a non-combat medal) was earned in a different sphere in 1952 when he had become an aerobically specialist on Vampire jets.

Like the best of the generation that contested the long hot summer of 1940 with the Luftwaffe's pilots, Kingaby combined what seemed a nonchalant approach to his duties with a relentless desire to be at the throat of the enemy. On the ground a pleasure-loving, buoyant young man with a particular love of partying, he was, like his great compatriots, Malan, Bader and Stanford Tuck, transformed into a perfectly tuned fighting machine as soon as he was airborne. Only an icy application to his craft and relentless powers of concentration over prolonged periods could have seen him through a succession of

exhausting days on which he several times engaged three or more enemy aircraft.

A clergyman's son, Donald, Ernest Kingaby joined the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in April 1939 at the age of 19. He was called up when war broke out in September. In June 1940 he was posted as a sergeant pilot to 266 Squadron. He had less than a month's operational flying with it (during which he did, however, damage two Ju88 bombers and an Me110 twin-engine fighter) before being transferred to 92 Squadron in September. The squadron was an outfit congenial to his own temper, renowned for its fighting prowess if not for its smartness of uniform and deportment when not in the air. Like Kingaby a large

proportion of its pilots were auxiliaries and did not take kindly to what they saw as unnecessary discipline. This had the slightest effect on a fighting efficiency which gave the squadron its 100th combat victory by October 1940.

By this time the Battle of Britain proper is generally reckoned to have been over as the Germans switched their bombers to night attacks on Britain's cities. But the daylight offensive was continued by their fighters and set Fighter Command new and difficult problems, involving its aircrews in often long climbs and fruitless chases of a much more elusive target than the thick of this less rewarding form of form of combat

Kingaby soon demonstrated his superb skills as a pilot, shooting down four enemy aircraft, of which three were Me109s, in the second half of October. In the next month he shot down six Me109s, four in a single astonishing day, November 15.

This prolific scoring continued into the new year when Fighter Command went onto the offensive with its sweeps over the continent. This was by no means a fruitful period for many RAF pilots - and losses were rather high - but with a dozen more kills to his credit Kingaby was soon being referred to by the press as the "109 specialist".

In October 1941 he was commissioned and taken off operations so that his experience could be put at the service of a training unit. But by March 1942 he was back in the conflict with 111 Squadron. By this time a new adversary had appeared, the Focke-Wulf 190, the most formidable interceptor to be fielded by the Luftwaffe so that date and a match for the Spitfire V. But Kingaby took it in his stride and soon became as noted for his capacity to knock the Fw190 out of the sky as he had the Me109.

Later in the war Kingaby was posted to 122 Squadron as, successively, a flight and then squadron commander and in March 1943 was promoted to lead the Hornchurch wing. After a further period at Fighter Command HQ he was sent back as a wing leader in the summer of 1944 in the air battles which raged over the invasion of occupied France. His last "bag", a share in an Me109 on June 30, was his last combat victory, bringing his total to 23. He also claimed eight probables. After the war he was given a permanent commission, and in the 1950s took naturally to jet aircraft.

He retired in 1958 and several years ago moved with his wife, Helen, to join their two daughters, Patricia and Susan, in the United States.

PROFESSOR KENDAL DIXON

Professor Kendal Carwright Dixon, professor of cellular pathology at Cambridge university from 1973 to 1978, died on December 17 aged 79. He was born on February 16, 1911.

KENDAL Dixon attained international distinction as a cellular pathologist but never became so immersed in his research that he cut himself off from those around him. He strove to nurture the talents of his students, encouraging them when they flagged and praising them when they succeeded. His interest in both their academic development and their welfare continued long after they had gone down.

Dixon was the second of three sons of Professor Henry H. Dixon, FRS, professor of botany and director of the botanical garden of Trinity College, Dublin. He entered King's College, Cambridge, in 1930, was awarded a scholarship the following year, and obtained a first class in both parts of the natural sciences tripos. The next three years he spent as a research student in the department of biochemistry working on the carbohydrate metabolism of the cerebral cortex and the Pasteur effect for his PhD which he was awarded in 1936. He obtained his clinical training at Trinity College, Dublin, and St Bartholomew's hospital, London.

In 1937 he was elected a fellow of King's, and two years later he became Fearnside scholar for clinical research in organic nervous disease. However, at the outbreak of war he joined the RAMC as a medical officer, and by 1942 he had become a major as a specialist in pathology. During his military career he was engaged on research over a wide field including relapsing fever, malaria and the early clinical trials of penicillin.

In 1945 he returned to Cambridge, where he was made an official fellow of King's and a university demonstrator in pathology. His research interests had now crystallised into the histocytochemistry of mammalian cells and in particular the cells of the central nervous system. In 1956 he was awarded the MD for his thesis on "Cytochemical events in the necrosis of grey matter". His international distinction as a cell pathologist was recognised by the university when he was made reader in cytopathology in 1962. It was further recognised by the creation of a

personal chair in 1973. He held this until he retired in 1978.

His upbringing in a university family had a great influence on his scientific career. Family holidays at Dooks in Kerry were frequently joined by the brilliant physicist John Joly, associated with Dixon's father as originator of the cohesion theory of the ascent of sap.

When Joly was not sailing, he was frequently walking with Dixon and stimulating his interest in natural science and the scientific approach. Influenced both by his father and Professor Joly, Dixon eventually centred his interests on the cellular level, but he chose the mammalian rather than the botanical cell. His particular interests as a cellular pathologist centred on the biochemical and histological changes produced by anoxia on cells, in particular the neurone.

Dixon was also an expert on antique silver and a connoisseur of wines. For many years he was in charge of the fellows' wines, during which time he furnished the cellar with skill and loving care, besides looking after the silver. His chief contribution to college life, however, was pastoral. From 1951 to 1959 he was the college's tutor for advanced students, taking infinite trouble over their selection and welfare. From 1959 he was director of studies in medicine.

His devoted care did not cease when his pupils went down: he made sure that they were entered for the right teaching hospitals, and got the college to entertain them at high table whenever they returned to take final examinations.

In 1938 he married Anne Darley. She and their son and daughter survive him.



Fresh look at work of neglected artist

By JOHN SHAW

DEGAS collected him. Whistler thought he was the greatest artist since Hogarth, and Phil May, the famous draughtsman and illustrator, described Charles Keene, a contemporary, as "the daddy of the lot of us".

Since then, he had been largely forgotten but a comprehensive exhibition that could revive his reputation opens in London today.

Keene (1823-1891) was a leading contributor to *Punch* from 1851 until shortly before his death. There have only been two retrospectives devoted to his work and the exhibition offers a much wider scope for critical revaluation of a neglected Victorian reputation.

More than 80 original drawings and water colours, examples of all his etchings and over 20 books he illustrated are on view, together with photographs and other ephemera.

Some of his earliest drawings were in the fly-leaf and margins of the text books at Ipswich Grammar school. A much decorated copy of Homer's *Iliad* is among the exhibits, together with sketches done for pocket money in the 1840s. Most of

the technicalities of his craft were learnt working for a firm of book engravers in the town. He later struck up a friendship with John Tenniel on returning to London and like his friend, who illustrated Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, Keene became one of the pillars of *Punch* and joined its celebrated "table" in 1860.

Michael Broadbent, a director of Christie's, who organised the exhibition, has collected Keene since the 1950s. He said: "I hope this exhibition helps to revive his name. He was unheralded, unsung, a modest man who never stopped drawing all his life. I think he is brilliant."

Mr Broadbent said that when he began collecting he was lucky enough to buy four Keene drawings for £2 in 1956. *Punch* studies could still be had for £40-£50, but the artist's life studies were now selling for between £400 and £1,000.

Charles Keene of *Punch*, Christie's, King Street, London SW1, January 4-27, Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm, Sat, Sun, 2pm-5pm. Admission free. Supported by *Punch*.

Liao Mosha, essayist and fierce critic of Chairman Mao and his wife, the "Gang of Four" leader Jiang Qing, died on December 27 aged 83. He was born on January 16, 1907.

LIAO Mosha's moment in the limelight came in a Peking courthouse in 1980 when he had a shouting match with Jiang Qing, who was on trial for crimes committed during the Cultural Revolution. Liao Mosha told in tears how Jiang Qing had slandered him as a "very dangerous special agent" and how during his subsequent imprisonment all his teeth had been knocked out. Jiang Qing interrupted, yelling at him not to make things up and the judge shouted that she was not allowed to speak. Jiang Qing then replied that Liao Mosha was a "renegade and a rotten egg". As everyone shouted at everyone else and the courtroom descended into chaos,

some reports quote Liao Mosha as cursing Jiang Qing, saying excitedly: "Shut up, you bitch." Jiang Qing had to be escorted from the courtroom and Liao Mosha continued with his accusation in his absence, shouting and sobbing: "Jiang Qing! Look what evils your people have done, evils too numerous to count!"

His testimony helped to bring her a death sentence, which was later commuted to life imprisonment. Liao had attracted the unfriendly attention of Jiang Qing 13 years before by making thinly-veiled attacks on Chairman Mao and had been imprisoned as one of the first victims of what was to become 10 years of chaos and malice and mass persecution.

Liao Mosha worked as a journalist in Shanghai and Peking in the 1930s and 1940s and moved to Peking just before "liberation" in 1949. He became editor of the

theoretical journal *Frontline* and editor-in-chief of the party mouthpiece *People's Daily*. He became director of the unified front work department in the Peking city government.

His courage in the face of China's powerful political leaders first surfaced in the 1960s. With Wu Han and Deng Tuo, two writers who were, like him, members of the Peking city government, he wrote essays aimed at the powerful advisory group the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and he kept a low profile. The official news release concerning his death was just one line long, and nowhere in the Chinese media was there an obituary of him. Although criticism of the Gang of Four is now sanctioned and indeed encouraged, criticism of Chairman Mao is a far more touchy subject and Liao Mosha's role a sensitive one.

labour camp for another three years. He was the only one of the "three family village" writers to survive the harsh years of the Cultural Revolution and was rehabilitated in 1979, three years after the death of Mao and after the arrest of the Gang of Four. He described the Cultural Revolution as "the great revolution that sent culture to its death".

After his rehabilitation Liao Mosha was made a member of the powerless advisory group the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and he kept a low profile. The official news release concerning his death was just one line long, and nowhere in the Chinese media was there an obituary of him. Although criticism of the Gang of Four is now sanctioned and indeed encouraged, criticism of Chairman Mao is a far more touchy subject and Liao Mosha's role a sensitive one.

King's Christmas message hits sour note in the press

From HARRY DEBELJUS in MADRID

KING Juan Carlos has become a target of snipers in the press for the first time since he launched Spain on the road to democracy in 1976. Normally cautious with his words, the king has always been seen to be unconditionally on the side of freedom; but in his year-end message, broadcast on Christmas eve, he appealed to journalists to show "restraint and respect for the truth", a phrase that cocked the snipers' guns, in the wake of complaints by the prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, about widespread reporting of corruption.

The reaction was immediate. One television channel explained that all the king's speeches were written at the prime minister's residence. Whether the report was intended to show that the king was not really responsible for what he had said is not clear, but perhaps it was just the kind of story the king had been referring to. It was a half-truth. While the king's speeches are written for him and are co-ordinated with government policy, he retains - and has exercised - the right to alter them.

The king also said in his speech: "It is hard to conceive an advanced democracy without a balance between veracity of information and maximum respect for freedom of expression." One popular columnist, Antonio Burgos, in, of all things, the monarchist daily *ABC* of Madrid, replied that obviously the king was not talking about Spain, since it was far from being an



Juan Carlos: facing the ire of newspaper writers

advanced democracy. An editorial comment in the Madrid daily *El Mundo* took the monarch to task for another reason. "We have no objections to his wish, except to ask that his call for responsibility be extended to all sectors of public life. Furthermore, it is worth asking whether this

question deserved so much attention from the Crown, especially since there was no room in his talk for a mention of such a crucial problem as the increasing political corruption, considering that the principal motive for friction between the press and the power is the denunciation of that corruption."

Writing a column in the same newspaper, Rafael Torres remarked: "With each Christmas message the king is less understandable ... because he does not live in the same world as the rest of us mortals. I am grateful to the man for sending us a yuletide greeting from the pulchritude of his status, even when there are considerations with which I cannot agree, such as his knuckle-rap for the press ... The king has received a lot of praise for always being in his place; but where he should be at least once a year is in ours."

100 years of lifesaving

THE centenary celebrations of the Royal Life Saving Society began in London yesterday with the launch of a series of events to raise its profile (William Cash writes).

The society is the largest water safety and lifesaving organisation in the world, providing teaching programmes over 50 countries and 150 lifeguard units in Britain. When the society was founded in 1891, over 5,000 people drowned each year in inland waters compared with 528 deaths last year. Celia

Godsall, director of the society, said that the majority of drownings were avoidable. "A child of six can easily perform resuscitation, it is so easy to learn but most adults would not know where to start," she said.

The centenary calendar includes an event at the Boat Show, which opened in Earl's Court yesterday, the first Commonwealth lifeguard championships later in the year and a programme to improve the teaching of lifesaving techniques in schools.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr T.N. Adam and Miss H.J. Gooch

The engagement is announced between Tom, son of Mr and Mrs Bruce Adam, of Norwich, Norfolk, and Helen, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs John Gooch, of Albourne, West Sussex.

Mr C.P. Arbuthnot and Miss F.J. Dickinson

The engagement is announced between Charles Petrie, younger son of Mr and Mrs J.K. Arbuthnot, of Ipswich, Suffolk, and Penelope Jane, only daughter of Mr and Mrs J.E.J. Dickinson, of Kirby-le-Soken, Essex.

Mr D.J. Bartholomew and Miss J. Vince

The engagement is announced between Darren James, son of Mr and Mrs R.A.J. Bartholomew, of Wickford, Essex, and Joanna, daughter of Dr and Mrs F.P. Vince, of Coventry.

Mr A.G. Bell and Miss K.E. Seaton

The engagement is announced between Alistair, eldest son of Mr and Mrs David Bell, of Eskdale South, Esk, Queensland, Australia, and Kate, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Seaton, of Dorchester, Dorset.

Mr M.P.D. Billingham and Miss G.A. Stone

The engagement is announced between Mark, eldest son of Mrs Patricia Thompson, of Redditch, Worcestershire, and Mrs Jeff Billingham, of Monmouth, and Georgia, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Stone, of Hampstead, London.

Mr M.D.E. Clifford-Holmes and Mrs G. Varma

The engagement is announced between Mark, eldest son of Mrs Clifford-Holmes, of Tonnes, and Mrs Gloria Holmes, of Woking, and Gita, younger daughter of Mr Victor and Lady Olivia Waldron, of (Idleigh Cottage, Meopham, Kent.

Mr J.N. Holland and Miss N.A. Chaudh

The engagement is announced between Nicholas, younger son of Mr and Mrs P.B. Holland, of Chislehurst, Kent, and Anjali, daughter of Mr and Mrs K.K. Chaudh, of Kobe, Japan.

Mr C.R. Elm and Miss F.J. Tadmor

The engagement is announced between Charles, eldest son of Mr and Mrs G.W. Elm, of Albany, Surrey, and Fendell, younger daughter of Colonel and Mrs John Tadmor, of West End Mill, Donhead St Andrew, Shaftesbury, Dorset.

Mr C.C. Fisher and Miss C.M. Bromage

The engagement is announced between Christopher Charles, eldest son of Mr and Mrs R.C. Fisher, of Christchurch, Hampshire, and Clare Mary, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Kenneth Bromage, of Holme Chase, Devon.

Mr T.H. Gort and Miss B.A. Coleman

The engagement is announced between Tahir, third son of Mr John Gort, MP, and Mrs John Gort, and Brenda, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Gordon Coleman, of Harrow, Middlesex.

Mr J. Gould and Miss E.A. Addison

The engagement is announced between Hong Kong, of Jonathan, son of the late Mr and Mrs Cedric Gould, and Elizabeth, daughter of Mr and Mrs Arthur Mackie, of Sandhurst, Kent, and formerly of Hong Kong.

Mr M.C. Hedegard and Miss S.A. Cooper

The engagement is announced between Michael, son of His Excellency and Mrs Fleming Hedegard, of Copenhagen, and Susan, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Neville Cooper, of Kensington.

Mr J.N. Holland and Miss N.A. Chaudh

The engagement is announced between Nicholas, younger son of Mr and Mrs P.B. Holland, of Chislehurst, Kent, and Anjali, daughter of Mr and Mrs K.K. Chaudh, of Kobe, Japan.

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Mr R.R.T. Kirkham and Miss J.A. Eller

The engagement is announced between Robin Raymond Tyrwhitt, younger son of Mr Michael and the Hon Mrs Kirkham, of Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, and Jennifer Anne, daughter of Mr and Mrs E.C. Eller, of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Captain R.M. Pugh-Cook and Miss J.M.L. Barker

The engagement is announced between Robert Mark Pugh-Cook, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, eldest son of Mr and Mrs R.G. Pugh-Cook, of Elmbridge, Worcestershire, and Julia Margaret Louise, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs C.C. Barker, of Essex, Devon.

Mr D.M. Quigley and Miss S.C. Loe

The engagement is announced between Mark, elder son of Mr and Mrs Desmond Quigley, of Chalfont St. Peter, Buckinghamshire, and Caroline, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Dieter Loe, of Windsor, Berkshire.

Mr J.D. Retherick and Miss V.S. Wilkinson

The engagement is announced between James Dirk, eldest son of Mr and Mrs C. Retherick, of Chestfield, Whitestable, Kent, and Victoria Sarah, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs G. Wilkinson, of Newton, Wiscob, Cambridgeshire.

Mr S.H.J. Robinson and Miss J.E. Morgan

The engagement is announced between Simon, eldest son of Mrs Wendy Cox, of Lydney, Rutland, and the late Mr Hedley Robinson, of Monksilver, Northumberland, and Jane, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jack Morgan, of Weymouth, Dorset.

Mr P.R.N. Skelton and Miss J.C. Walsham

The engagement is announced between Nicholas, only son of Major F.R. Skelton, of Freshwater, Isle of Wight, and Jane, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs J.W. Walsham, of West Tilbury, Essex.

EDMUND AKENHEAD

Geoffrey Hicks writes:

AS AN octogenarian crossword addict and fellow member of the colonial service in Tanganyika who knew Edmund Akenhead for 40 years, may I be allowed to add a piece to your obituary (December 24), admirably written so far as it went.

His work as a government conveyancer in the land office did not absorb his energies. His agility of mind was matched by that of his fingers. He was a marvellous conjuror. I remember not so much of his

apparatus as of his pure legdeman. Objects could disappear and reappear between his fingers at point blank range, and so on. He was always in demand at children's parties.

Again he was a talented actor and producer of plays for the Dar es Salaam Players, our amateur dramatic society; also a superior chess player and an enthusiastic golfer. We all had to retire early because of the grant of political independence. Only then did he give his full time to crosswords.

Historic house gains new future

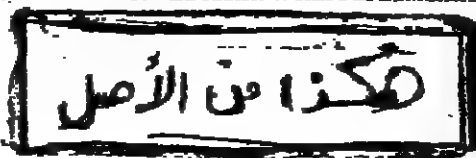
By KERRY GILL

AFTER being used as an hotel, a sanatorium and a prisoner of war camp, Duff House in Banffshire, an outstanding example of the work of William Adam, a leading 18th century Scottish architect, is to become an art gallery, the government said yesterday.

Once an initial phase of conservation work is completed on Duff House, the National Galleries of Scotland will begin hanging pictures considered appropriate to a country house of its era. The house, built between 1735 and 1741 although never completed, needs many repairs and alterations before its potential can be realised.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, the Scottish environment minister, said: "It is a very exciting prospect, but of course it is also important to ensure that the historic fabric of the house is properly prepared and this takes time. Once the scale of the work is fully appreciated, a realistic timetable can be drawn up."

Duff House became government-owned in 1956 and was opened to the public as an empty shell in 1975. The gallery will be run by Gramplan regional and Banff and Buchan district councils. They, with the National Galleries of Scotland and Historic Scotland, have been asked to assess what work is needed.



Is Britain going barking mad?

As Birmingham prepares to play host to Crufts next week, Alan Franks examines an ambivalent affair

I know a man who dances with his bull terrier, not a down-on-all-fours-pretending-to-be-a-dog dance, but a cross between a waltz and a Catalanian stomp. It is very funny and rather dangerous, like Oliver Reed at a *thé dansant*. They hold each other in the textbook manner, just proper enough not to be called passionate, and wait towards the open French windows and the verandah beyond. It usually happens after he has dined not wisely but too well, and the potent charm of cheap gramophone music has smuggled affection into his bloodstream.

So much for the dog. The man shows similar symptoms, and it is obvious that the two respect each other in the harmony of movement. It could just be love.

A single brief glance should be enough to persuade the onlooker that the whole, very English idea of an owner coming to resemble his dog is, and always has been, a nonsense. There is simply no need for such a *rapprochement* of styles, for the simple reason that it has already been done; the man has got the dog precisely because its looks are an expression of his own self-image. That function has been a vital clause in the unwritten contract between owner and owned since the date of purchase. When the Rhodesian ridge-back, Weimaraner, stonksperker, Norwegian Buhunds, affenpinschers and the rest come to compete in the bound, gundog, terrier, utility, working and toy groups of next week's centenary Crufts Dog Show, it is not just dogs that will be on display, but a whole range of human aspirations whirled into canine form.

All this should not be thought strange. Six out of ten British dog-owners take their dogs to bed. (Who would put money on this being a significantly lower proportion than that of husbands who do the same with their wives?) Some dance with their dogs, others sleep with them, and almost all talk to them. This addressing of an animal in a language which is Greek to it may appear lunatic, but, if they did not have the dog, the chances are they would be talking to themselves which would be seen as madder still.

We have not co-existed, nor even co-existed with the dog to our mutual advantage, so much as invented the thing by a combination of prinking and training and cross-breeding until it came to satisfy our decorative and functional needs.

Only when you scratch the surface of the greater self-image, the national one about us being a whole consortium of dog-lovers, do you find the lie beneath the truth, the dog beneath the skin. There has to be a catch, and it is this: love, when applied to the British and their canine dependency of 7.4 million, really does



Love is a warm puppy: Lord Hailsham and Deirdre Shannon (with Spot, their pet Jack Russell) at their wedding in London, in 1986

The whole, very English idea of an owner coming to resemble his dog is, and always has been, nonsense

mean love. And love, in turn, means not only cherishing and mourning, but all the other darker impulses which stalk the emotion: snubbing, resenting, subverting, neglecting and betraying.

How else are the joyless bits of information to be explained? In 1989 the RSPCA successfully prosecuted 131 owners for cruelty, a record figure since the foundation of the society in 1924. Almost 45,000 complaints were under investigation during the same period. And while the RSPCA found homes for 46,739 abandoned dogs during that year, it was also compelled to destroy a further 52,844. Recorded incidents of cruelty to dogs rose by 10 per cent in the first nine months of last year.

If it is possible to institutionalise neglect, then this particular ND (Nation of Dog-Lovers) can be said to have brought it off in 1988 with the abolition of the licence on the spurious grounds that, at a mere 37p, it was costing more to collect than the revenue it generated. Even countries which do not figure in our national consciousness as shining NDs have registration in some form. Britain is alone among EC nations in having none.

To persevere with the pre-conceptions of love, we must consider its conditional aspect, for in the British man/dog arrangement it is also its most prevalent one. Once the creature has been subjected to the stifling experience of anthropomorphism, it often follows that human standards of compliance are expected of it,

without the legal or moral safety nets which prevent most infants being flung out if they do not come up to snuff. There is salutary evidence on this from Valerie Pratt, who in 1970 opened an independent organisation named the Central Dog Registry, the aim of which was to reunite lost dogs with their owners. This it did, and was successful in 95 per cent of the cases it handled. In commercial terms, however, it was a flop, and finally limped out of being in 1988. The problem was that there were not enough dog-lovers who loved their dogs enough to hang around for the five-minute exercise of having an identity tattoo scratched (painlessly) into the back of the right hind leg.

For all that the love is conditional, the proportion of dogs in the United Kingdom that go into care is less than 10 per cent of the total population. It would take only a mild abuse of the statistics to demonstrate that this makes our relationship with dogs no worse than our relationship with humans. In the view of the animal behaviourist Dr Roger Mugford, to whom serious dog talk eventually leads as surely as roads to Rome, there is a pleasant informality in the way we carry on

with dogs, and this reveals the nicest aspects of human need. Dr Mugford is admirably firm on the attraction of apoposies: ownership of an Afghan or saluki is almost always female, or else homosexual, just as possession of a samoyed or malamute invariably denotes machismo.

We have five phases in our cycle of relationships with dogs: the appearance stage, when the creature will, like the owner, be an expression of vigour, poise, fashion, sexual potency and all the other standard ingredients of youth; then comes the macho bit, malamute man; then the family phase, when the function expected of the dog is that of baby-calmer and comforter of neglected wife — golden retriever days; next, the child-substitute dog once the children have left home, and finally the retirement dog, an elderly dachshund perhaps, or else a bull terrier, dancing or otherwise.

But there is a threat from the cat as surrogate dog for working couples who leave their households empty during the day. In terms of status however, let alone grandeur, the cat will never make it. Listen to John Gay, in his *Elegy on a Lap Dog*, and try substituting cat for dog. It carries mock-heroic to the point of hilarity.

He's dead. Oh! lay him gently in the ground! And may his tomb be by this verse renowned: Here Shock, the pride of all his kind is laid, Who fawned like man, but ne'er like man betrayed.

Or even to a non-Brit, Mark Twain, in *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*: "If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. That is the principal difference between a dog and a man."

Of course it is love, for we catch ourselves unawares and fall headlong into one last, rabid hypocrisy. So much do we adore the dog that we reserve for it a bowl of attributes which we withhold from ourselves; at the same time, when we contemplate and then reject a particularly vile course of action, we declare that we "wouldn't do it to a dog". So do we disparage some hideous form of existence as "a dog's life". So which of the two clichés have we allowed to sneak past against our better instincts? The dotting of the disparaging?

There is worse, and newer. An ugly woman is described, even in some supposedly civilised circles, as "a dog". Does this mean that the maker of the remark in fact loves her, since he belongs to a nation of dog-lovers? Or is it simply consistent with the rhetoric of demeaning, designed to take the dog down along with the woman? And what on earth does it tell us about the English (male) attitude to women? If it has half the ambivalence of his, and her, attitude to dogs, then God help us all.

Where the rod still rules

Corporal punishment in schools has taken a caning in recent years, but strongholds remain

PARENTS prepared to pay for the privilege of having their children beaten at school are discovering that it is increasingly difficult to find establishments that will do so.

The cane mutiny, which brought about the abolition of corporal punishment in state schools in 1987, has spread into the private sector, causing a growing number of independent schools to spare the rod. Although this is Britain's first No Smacking Week, there are still parents who seek out schools that offer what is delicately described in prospectuses as "a positive attitude to discipline".

According to the Rev Canon Charles Johnson, the provost of the £6,000-a-year Seaford College in West Sussex, and, until last year, the school's headmaster for 46 years, many parents send their sons there because it is one of the few public schools which maintain the use of the cane.

Canon Johnson says he has not used the cane for about ten years — on that occasion it was for a case of shoplifting — but he considers it a useful deterrent. "Sometimes, when a boy is in serious trouble, it is a good weapon to keep in the armoury," he says. "It sometimes brings them down to reality if they are being very silly."

The school canes a boy only after consulting his parents, and Canon Johnson regards it as "a last resort. History will tell you that you have, sometimes, to wake a chap up and make him realise what he's doing. There are lines that must not be crossed."

This is not a view shared by most head teachers at public schools. They believe that modern education has no room for formal displays of premeditated violence. Only 12 of Britain's 579 private secondary schools retain the option of beating their pupils, a figure that has more than halved in the past three years. They include St James's Independent School for Boys, in south Kensington, London.

"One of the problems is that quite a lot of parents want this damn thing to go on," says Klaus Boehm, the co-author of *The Equitable Schools Book*, an annual guide to independent schools. "My view is that it is just like child abuse — if you have a child, you do not use it at his school. He has, however, administered the cane himself in the past. 'In the case of some boys, it was a shock that worked,' he says."

He believes that newspaper reports after the publication of the first edition of his book in 1987 resulted in several schools abolishing corporal punishment. Mill Hill School, in north London, Framlingham College, Suffolk, the Oratory School, Berkshire, and Ryde School, on the Isle of Wight, all

recently removed corporal punishment as a disciplinary option.

Mr Boehm says it is mostly preparatory schools which uphold the Dickensian tradition of whacking pupils, a practice he describes as "sheer mass brutality". An anomaly is that only pupils whose fees are entirely paid by their parents can be beaten legally — unlike children on assisted places. "The absurdity is that you get in the same school two classes of pupils, the beatable and the unbeatable," says Peter Newell, the co-ordinator of Epoch (End Physical Punishment of Children). "It is outrageous and indefensible. The current position has no logic or morality whatever. The more isolated it becomes as a practice, the more likely it is that the people who are doing it have seriously warped, sadistic reasons."

Even in Scotland, where standards of discipline in schools are traditionally higher than in the rest of Britain, caning is less popular among independent schools than it was. At the Edinburgh Academy, where corporal punishment still exists, it has not been used for about five years. "Before that, there were two people who used it because they were in the habit of doing so," says the academy's rector, Laurence Ellis. "But they have left."

Although he caned boys as a housemaster at his previous school, Marlborough College, in Wiltshire, Mr Ellis now prefers to punish them by detention, and, in extreme cases, solitary confinement with the potential of expulsion. He believes that, while beating may be justified for "silly things", such as the occasion when a boy appeared jam over another's belongings, "if it's a big important matter, it does not affect the issue at all. If you are up against someone who is a bully you are simply using the same weapon." His suggestion that caning be formally abolished was recently turned down by the school governors due to "a body of opinion who felt it was the best form of punishment".

Geoffrey Parker, the high master of Manchester Grammar School and the chairman of the Headmasters' Conference, which represents about 230 independent schools, regards corporal punishment as "a barny practice", and does not use it at his school. He has, however, administered the cane himself in the past. "In the case of some boys, it was a shock that worked," he says. "He believes there were benefits for teachers because, 'although it is an appalling thing to say, it sometimes was a way of expressing real anger on the part of the member of staff concerned, and that is more difficult to do now because the violence is part of the anger'."

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A mystery solved, a life remembered

On Sunday it will be a year since my daughter Roxanne died in hospital, aged 18 days. She was our first child, and when friends learnt that Roxanne was one of six babies who had died of a "mystery virus" in the Brompton hospital and that her death and short life were to be the subject of an inquest, their sympathy was even greater.

To them it seemed that, on top of everything else, we had to face new uncertainty over the cause of her death, media interest, and a full investigation into the care given her. But we now realise that the investigation, and even the accompanying press speculation, in confronting any doubts over her care may have helped us deal with the unique distress of losing a very young child.

Roxanne was born at St Helier hospital, in south London, on December 18, 1989. At 10z under 9lb, a beautiful, strong baby, she gave us no clue as to the malformations inside her chest. She took to breast feeding easily, and as new parents we found endless pleasure in watching her every movement, imagining her to be angry or mischievous.

A slightly raised temperature — possibly due to an infection from the not uncommon act of swallowing meconium in the amniotic fluid — meant she must stay in hospital a little longer. Even when she was moved down the corridor to the special care unit, for 24-hour observation, our only concern was that her infection would clear up in time for us to take her home for Christmas. But all that changed on Christmas eve.

Having collected my wife Claire at lunchtime, we returned to the hospital expect-

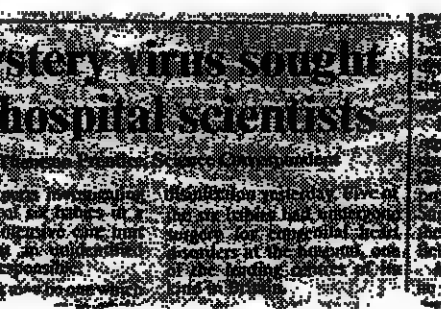
ing to feed and settle Roxanne for the night and then to come back next morning to fetch her home for Christmas breakfast. She was still in her cot when we got to the hospital, but while we had been away she had become breathless and a plastic box had been placed over her head to supply her with oxygen-enriched air. The nurse said it would be OK to breast-feed her as usual, and Claire gratefully picked her up while I held a tube near to Roxanne's nose to blow oxygen over her face. But despite the oxygen she began to pant and her colour changed markedly. Claire was now very frightened and, though desperate to cuddle Roxanne, asked the nurse to put her back in the oxygen box, where she continued to breathe erratically. For the first time since her birth we now knew that she was in serious difficulty. A little later, when we were taken aside and asked if we had any pictures of Roxanne, and whether we would like to have her baptised, we were left in no doubt about just how ill our baby was.

She was rapidly transferred to the Brompton hospital, in west London, one of the premier units in paediatric heart problems, where she was put on a ventilation machine and given a number of drugs to try to stabilise her heart condition. There was no restriction on our access and for the next ten days we watched as doctors and nurses

worked unceasingly to give Roxanne a chance of life, including surgery for two of the many heart problems we now realised she had. At first we would hope to hear that she had had a stable night, and that her drug levels had been reduced or her ventilation had been turned down. Then we learnt that being stable was no longer good enough; she had to show some signs of improvement, or she would never be able to come off the ventilator.

The pattern that developed was that she would become very ill, then the doctors would manage to stabilise her, albeit at a more serious level than before. Every day we could see in numbers and coloured lines how her battle for life was being fought. But, no matter how ill she was, we found that when we were at her bedside we always felt more reassured than when we were away.

On Friday, January 5 the problems of fluid in her lungs, which she'd had from the start, seemed a little worse. Even so the doctors managed to stabilise her again and we, in our one-day-at-a-time man-



Mystery virus sought by hospital scientists

ner, allowed ourselves our daily ration of optimism and went home.

At 9.30pm, we got the call we had been dreading. Roxanne had become very ill, and if it were possible for us to come in to see her, we should. She died at 7am the next day. We watched helplessly as the numbers — heart rate, blood pressure, blood oxygen content — slowly fell, indicating she was moving towards death. Around us the nurses and doctors fought on. While she was still just alive they allowed Claire to hold Roxanne while I cuddled Claire. Together we watched the various gauges start to flash as her functions became too faint to measure. When all the ventilator tubes and probes had been removed, I was taken by surprise at how beautiful she still was.

The finding of the inquest was that Roxanne had died from natural causes as a result of congenital heart disease, combined with a mirror-image arrangement of her internal organs and adult respiratory distress syndrome. This last factor, also known by the more descriptive term lung-shock, meant the lining of her lungs had died, and was the main subject at the inquest. Though she had had surgery, her operation was not normally serious enough to cause this kind of symptom.

Newspapers had speculated that a "mystery virus" was involved. The Brompton had

decided to close its paediatric intensive care unit for cleaning two days before Roxanne died, moving the babies to another ward. Another possibility was that a toxic chemical could have got into the lungs during treatment.

To investigate the causes independent consultants from national bodies examined aspects of care and submitted evidence to the inquest. Every aspect of Roxanne's treatment was held up to scrutiny, and every facet of the Brompton's care and the standards of its staff was found to be completely blameless.

The inquest closed 19 days after Roxanne's death, 13 days after she had been cremated. Though she had lived for less than three weeks, the inquest seemed to extend her life. Immediately after her death we were worried that she had slipped in and out of this world with too little disturbance, and wondered if we might come to doubt that she had ever lived. We did have some photographs taken of her before she became ill. But now, as a result of the inquest, we also had a scrap-book of newspaper cuttings to prove that she had existed.

We hope that the inquest has answered all the questions we might ever want to ask about her care. We had ourselves seen how everything possible had been done to try to give Roxanne a chance of life, and we believed nothing had been overlooked. Now we have something to hang on to that many parents could never have: proof.

JONATHAN CAMPBELL

© The Inquest into the deaths at Brompton Hospital failed to find a common factor. Only three babies had almost identical symptoms; two were suffering from heart complaints which led to their deaths.

هكذا من الأصل

GALLERIES

Rediscovery of England's quiet genius

Victorian artist Charles Keene and a show which places fine art works in their patrician context, reviewed by John Russell Taylor

Since so many exhibitions these days are predicated on an anniversary, it is probably wise to begin the new year by taking a deep breath and celebrating the first centenary which hovers into view. As it happens, Charles Keene died on January 4 1891, so the centenary show which opens today at Christie's could hardly be more timely.

But is it important? This is a year which will also commemorate Seurat, Ernst, Gericault, Stanley Spencer and sundry Old Masters. It cannot be claimed that Keene rings many bells in the art world today: the usual response is "One of those Punch cartoonists, wasn't he?" While someone who is pigeonholed along with Du Maurier, Tenniel and Raven-Hill is not necessarily negligible, it is not either a formula for instant excitement. And yet, testimonials of the grandest sort are not lacking. Whistler said he was the greatest artist since Hogarth. Degas was shattered by the brilliance of his draughtsmanship. Pissarro was another enthusiastic admirer, observing to his son Lucien "Remember, England has Keene, he does not exhibit, he is not fashionable, and that is everything."

This last comment indicates something of Keene's paradoxical reputation. He has always been an artists' artist. Totally unpretentious, he never thought of himself as a great painter, a great draughtsman, a great anything. He seems to have been perfectly content sketching alongside artist-friends like Millais (whom he assumed to be much more important than himself), drawing from life at the Clapham Artists' (later the Langham) Society and making the odd etching for the Junior Etching Club.

He was easy-going and eminently clubbable. He made his living, mostly from working up jokes devised by his old friend Joseph Crawhall Sr, the eccentric Tyneside printer, illustrator and poet, into a visual form which was presentable in Punch. He also happens to have been a genius.

In 1934 Lionel Lindsey published his exquisitely produced book *Charles Keene The Artists' Artist*, in which he took the radical step of detaching Keene's Punch cartoons from their often rather laborious captions and letting them speak for

themselves. It was a revelation for those few (the edition was only 130 copies) well enough placed to receive it. The revelation is repeated in the current exhibition — though here anyone who really wants to know what the drawing is "about" need only apply to the catalogue for enlightenment. The point is that even in the heaviest, most prosy jokes the pictures are not hefty, not prosy, not even in themselves particularly funny. If compared with the work of Leech, the drawings are a model of grace, delicacy and restraint: though humour is often clearly present, it is a very straight-faced sort of humour, sedulously avoiding caricature and always holding close to the reality of the situation, which, if properly understood, only makes the humour sharper.

Though Keene was self-taught (and perhaps too conscious of it), it is his technical skill which again and again takes the breath away. When he wants to, he can create a world in the absolute minimum of lines, as he does in landscape drawings such as "Sand Dunes near Southwold". But he was not a close associate of the Pre-Raphaelites for nothing, and it is hard to imagine a more exquisitely detailed piece of close observation than "Garden Door of the White Cottage": a multiplicity of lines, but each given its own exact weight and value. His handful of etchings includes some of the supreme masterpieces of 19th-century print-making, and images such as "Lady of 1860 seated reading a book" or "Portrait of Mme Zambaco sketching" need fear no comparison with the finest Impressionist prints.

Perhaps needless to say, Keene did not consider himself a painter at all. Very few oil paintings by him have survived, but this show includes most of them. And even here there is one unequivocal masterpiece, the self-portrait of 1860 now in the Tate. The artist is working at his easel, in his shirt-sleeves, and wearing a curious red smoking cap jauntily on the side of his head. He looks at the spectator with an elusively quizzical expression, searching, almost challenging. A good fellow, clearly, who is also a firmly private man. It is a good combination for the artist's work, probably not so good for building



Breathtaking skill: "Portrait of Mrs Edwards", late 1860s, by Charles Keene, on show at Christie's

the right sort of reputation. At least, a hundred years after the man's death it should be possible to correct any lingering misunderstandings, and finally accept Keene at his true worth.

The other show with which Christie's is beguiling the blessed interval between seasons of sales is much grander and less focused. *Patronage Preserved* concerns itself entirely with the vexed question of art and its proper context. Britain seems to have been preserving its stately homes, after and even during their period of private occupancy, longer and more systematically than any other country. But that has not always meant observing the integrity of the house and its original contents, let alone preserving intact the strains of purchases by successive owners. There may still be arguments about where the cut-off point should be, about whether a rigorous return to first principles is always the right course of action. But at least the idea is now firmly estab-

lished that, within reason, houses should be kept complete with their original furniture, and hung with the pictures which were bought or sometimes commissioned with just one context in mind.

The sub-title of this exhibition is "Masterpieces Saved for Country Houses". It is not necessary even to quibble over how many of the works included can be considered in any real sense masterpieces in order to see that the concept of the masterpiece is often irrelevant. What is under discussion is much less likely to be the potential loss to the nation of some art-work of world importance than the desirability of keeping the same old but not specially distinguished chairs in the same old but not specially distinguished room because they reflect back on each other, they create an ambience within which major works can really shine and minor works take on an added significance as part of a larger ensemble. History must after all be served, even if it is merely the history of taste in question.

Of course, showing a selection of works saved for country houses outside the country houses they were saved for is bound to be in a way self-defeating. But who is going to sniff at the opportunity to see the brilliant portraits of George Gordon, Lord Haddo and of Sir Matthew Fetherstonhaugh, among several fine examples of the art of Pompeo Batoni, Grand Tour artist (and therefore country house artist) par excellence? Nor are such admittedly minor but accomplished Old Masters as Bernardo Strozzi's "Christ and the Woman of Samaria" (from Kedleston), or oddities like Paul Delaroche's unexpectedly stark portrait of Guizot (from Haddo House) to be readily neglected. Ironically, though there is no doubt that they should be where they historically belong, they probably shine more brightly here.

Charles Keene of Punch. *Patronage Preserved*, Christie's, 8 King Street, St James's, SW1 (071-839 9060) Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat-Sun 2-5, Keene until Jan 27, *Patronage Preserved* until Jan 20.

Exchange of gifts which enriches both sides

Joseph Connolly reviews an outstanding exhibition of English silver, which is only temporarily back in Britain, on loan from the Soviet Union

A truly dazzling collection of English Elizabethan and Stuart silver is the latest manifestation of our increasingly healthy cultural relations with Moscow. It has been lent by the Kremlin to Sotheby's of Bond Street, in whose galleries the exhibition opened this week.

Learning that Moscow's Armoury Museum holds the world's largest and most important collection of silver of this period will come as a shock to most visitors. The collection has around 200 magnificent pieces from England alone, and even a glance at the exhibits currently on show in London confirms the claim: each is unique in design, heroic in scale and in such gleamingly fine condition as to be cumulatively breathtaking.

According to Sotheby's, there is just one piece of the period in the Queen's collection that is comparable in terms of quality and rarity with any of the treasures presented here. And this is a mere tenth of the Armoury's collection.

Unlike many stupendous collections around the world, the Armoury's silver owes nothing to the fruits of booty and plunder: all of it came as a result of trading and the exchange of increasingly lavish gifts between Elizabeth I and her

successors and the Tsars. This somewhat unlikely traffic reputedly has its roots in the failure in 1553 of the voyager Captain Richard Chancellor to discover a North-East passage to Cathay; he happened upon Muscovy instead.

During the 1550s the "Muscovy Company" was established in London, and mainly through this connection a vigorous trade rapidly developed. While England seemed more interested in acquiring necessities such as seal oil for lamp fuel and — surprisingly — tree trunks for the masts of ships, Russia's tastes tended to the luxurious: sugar, jewellery, clocks, furniture and silver.

The silver was always the most ornate and lavish available, which is why every piece here is so special. Although much of it was a "gift" from Elizabeth and later monarchs, the tacit understanding was that the merchant adventurers who actually conveyed the treasures to Russia should also have the privilege of paying for them.

This bizarre though perfectly credible arrangement ensured that



Stupendous but not practical: the Leopard "water flaggon" made in 1600, sold by Charles I

the most extravagant pieces survived, for at home they tended to be regarded as slightly unfashionable. Had they remained in England they would surely have been melted down like so much elaborate early plate — either on grounds of current taste, or else in order to provide

bullion to finance either a king's whim or perhaps a war.

The craftsmanship of the pieces on show is of the highest quality, displaying all of the silversmith's devices which here are exercised with a verve not readily associated with the period. Nevertheless, it seems clear that the fashioning of these marvellous artefacts was carried out simply in order to provide a reason for their eventual owners to amass vast quantities of extremely valuable metal.

Many of the huge and glittering silver-gilt objects are simply termed as a "water jug" or a "cup and cover", but these naive appellations belie the fact that they each stand three feet tall and weigh up to five stone.

This is true of the stupendous snow leopard, made in about 1600 and sold by Charles I in 1626 when parliament refused him more money — whereupon it was exported to Russia. This noble and somewhat lascivious heraldic beast stands on a massive square base cast with bold lobed borders, and is draped with thick chains suspended

from lion's head masks, though one feels sure that this barely moveable "water flaggon" never actually contained water.

The design of the exhibition is deliberately low-key, but that is not to say that one is straining amid twilight in order to see the exhibits: on the contrary, the cases and flooring are so pale grey as to be invisible, while every marvellous and shimmering silver-gilt treasure stands gleamingly proud against the crimson drop of the walls.

Lighting renders the objects splendid, but the brightness is carefully controlled, avoiding eye-fatigue. Rather, the cases are bathed in bright moonlight, at once stark and caressing. In its way, that is as impressive as the brilliance of the wonderful silver that each case contains.

At the end of the month, the collection returns to Russia; this fine exhibition therefore represents the first and last chance to see a unique and little-known aspect of England's cultural heritage. Such an opportunity should certainly should not be ignored.

English silver treasures from the Kremlin. Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London, W1 until Jan 28. Admission free. Catalogue £5.

RECORDS: ROCK

Soapbox jury

THERE has never been any danger of mistaking Mark E. Smith for a rock star. With his pasty complexion, ungainly deportment and lank schoolboy haircut, he has been one of the genre's most dependable subversives, in musical deed no less than in unfashionable gesture. Fourteen years since he convened The Fall in Manchester he remains a jarring presence on the sidelines of the main event, a born soapboxer ploughing regardless of who might or might not be listening. Visionary or charlatan? Who knows?

There is certainly a hefty weight of evidence on which Smith's detractors can call: his appalling singing, which meanders across the beat and round the note in a tuneless, rock 'n' roll evocation of a bingo caller; his painfully abstruse lyrics; the besetting discordance of his songs; and the eternally ramshackle playing of his band, no matter how many permutations of personnel drift through its ranks.

But counsel for the defence will be quick to point to the quirky originality of Smith's music; the giggling flashes of brilliance which abound amid the opaque tangle of butchered guitar riffs and clunky tom-tom tangoes; his refreshingly eccentric zest; and his brave multi-media excursions into theatre (with his play *Hept Lucian*) and dance (his collaboration with Michael Clark on *I am Kurious Oranj*).

Smith's record company has wisely chosen the deadead week in the music industry's year to launch 458489 B Sides.

The Fall: 458489 B Sides (Beggars Banquet BEGA 116) The Fall: 458489 A Sides (Beggars Banquet BEGA 111)

a compilation of B-sides taken from The Fall's singles released between 1984 and 1989. As its functional title and bold white cover design suggest, it is a companion to the 458489 A Sides collection, released last September.

It may seem a remarkable conceit to foist a double album of such avowedly second-string material on the market, but The Fall is one group whose music really does warp the inferior/superior continuum. Naturally, *A Sides* features the band's best known recordings, including the two nearly-his "There's a Ghost in my House" and Ray Davies's evergreen "Victoria". But *B Sides* is not short of inspiration or belt, its various odd-shaped patterns of sound knitting together like slabs of crazy paving.

No matter how solid the riff, The Fall's approach is strictly impressionistic and the band is at its best when conjuring the nightmarish atmosphere of "Sleep Debt Snatches" or the hardcore of "Pat-Trip Disperser".

Too unrefined to lodge in the digestive tract of the mass market, The Fall's music nevertheless retains its timeless sense of weird, impenetrable drama, and whatever is said about Smith on judgement day he will doubtless emerge with his cranky integrity intact.

DAVID SINCLAIR



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Harold in pieces

THE bid by Mark McCormack's International Management Group to take over Harold Holt Ltd, Britain's biggest concert agency, achieved partial success yesterday. One Holt director, Stephen Wright, will move to IMG with 29 performers. Two other Holt directors, as yet unnamed, are understood to have moved to the powerful New York agency, Columbia Artists. But Holt will continue as an independent agency with increased emphasis on orchestral touring.

Bad to verse?

HAVING already impersonated Joe Orton, wayward dramatist, in the film *Prick Up Your Ears*, actor Gary Oldman is now set to

tackle Dylan Thomas, wayward poet. *Dylan*, a biographical feature, will be directed early next year by David Drury. The film-makers are pursuing authenticity by shooting in Thomas's beloved Laugharne, but there will need to be a Welsh-accent expert standing by: apart from the English Oldman, the cast includes the American Uma Thurman, as Thomas's wife Caitlin. At least Thurman knows something about literary spouses: she was Mrs Henry Miller in that steamy spectacle *Henry and June*.

Last chance...

Chagall to Kitaj, the main exhibition in the Barbican's Israeli festival, is more about the Jewish experience than what has been happening specifically in Israel. Subjects vary from the Judaic to the superficially Jewish. Until Sunday at the Barbican Art Gallery (071-588 9023).

Early birth from the cocoon

Madam Butterfly Coliseum

THIS is one of those occasions when, glad as one was to be there, one comes away feeling it will be even more gladdening to be there at later performances. Susan Bullock's strong performance in the title role got better and better as the evening wore on, suggesting that she was not only overcoming early nerves (not helped by a wig with a mind of its own) but maybe even gaining the boosted confidence of someone surprising herself.

Her voice was, all through the performance, big and generous, her phrasing long. But it was only after the interval that she managed to maintain full tone right up to the very top, and only in the final scene that she began to display a wider range of colour and expression. Quite possibly this late intensifying was deliberate: after all, Butterfly has a lot to cope with in the half-hour before the curtain, and simplicity in the first act could be justified by her being a girl of 15. Her music, however, is not that of a 15-year-old (this is one detail that jars in a forceful, emotionally direct production such as Graham Vick's), and Bullock could allow herself more variety from the beginning.

But no doubt she does not now require any such advice: she will not need to be so cautious, having proved herself so well in the finale. She is not, it must be said, a natural actress, which means that her effectiveness depends very much on vocal power and control. Last night she gave the firmest indications that she has what it takes to project fierce pride, fragile hope and abundant despair through her singing, and to do so

as decisively in a pianissimo as when she is using her formidable full volume.

The role of Pinkerton in this revived English National Opera production, which goes back to Puccini's abandoned versions in order to toughen the anti-imperialist point, is somewhat curtailed and distinctly unsympathetic. That is a problem for a singer of such appealing lyrical ardour as Arthur Davies: he acted the cynical pig excellently, but the sound, fresh and free, was of an altogether nicer fellow.

Alan Opie's Sharpless is a much more unified creation. Rumped and careworn, and singing in a manner that is at once engagingly frank and consistently beautiful, he looked and sounded like a character out of Graham Greene: a man who acts always from the best possible motives, and thereby lacks the strength to deal with those who do not.

Louise Winter makes a heartening company debut as Suzuki: a younger maid than usual, quick and vigorous in her emotional responses, fighting tenaciously for Butterfly with great warmth and occasional hot rage in her singing.

The smaller roles, too, are well and characterfully sung, with Mark Richardson an imposing Bonze, John Kitchener a suave, worldly Yamadori (though such a man would hardly be visiting this Butterfly's muddy, hovel) and John Harris a Goro who pulls off the trick of making the ingratiating marriage-broker at once workable as a character and repugnant as a chauvinist stereotype. Not everything in the production achieves this double objective quite so skilfully, and the orchestra, under Michael Lloyd, needs more care and polish. The central performances, though, are well in place.

PAUL GRIFFITHS



Susan Bullock as Butterfly and Arthur Davies as Pinkerton

tor par excellence, Felicity Lott. Mozart was quickly dispatched after reading a melting and apocryphal letter from his fiancée. Hahn's fanciful version of the life certainly makes Shaffer's read like the definitive biography. But this "Homage to Printemps" continues as wittily as its title promised. Those who lament the all-too-rare performances by the financially abridged Songmakers' Almanac may notice that its founder, compiler and pianist, Graham Johnson, is now disseminating his programming as well as his accompanying skills somewhat farther and wider these days.

This was a programme he devised for Lott and himself to

perform in Paris five years ago. Audiences at the Athenaeum must have been as delighted as the Wigmore's full house to hear arias from Offenbach's *La Grande Duchesse de Gênes* romping out from the shadows of Poulenc's mordantly archaic "A sa guitare", and subsiding into Messager's arch ditty, "J'ai deux amants". Oscar Strauss's "Je ne suis pas ce que l'on pense" spoke truly. Lott showed herself to be mistress of both vocal and aural illusion, first changing from 1950s summer pink to widow's weeds, then letting her shawl slip down from her bare shoulders even as she savoured and stretched the malleable French vowels.

Printemps herself could scarcely have been more verdant. On seeing her in "L'Amour masqué" Noël Coward wrote that "she annihilated all critical faculties". Lott and Johnson together bid fair to do pretty much the same by the end of the evening with their encore, an irresistible Coward ditty, "I'll follow my secret heart". The first half, rather more serious stuff, with Gounod and Faure pitched against Schumann and Wolf, came more slowly out of bud, but spring was there, too, sure enough in the vibrant movement and constantly changing colours of Lott's bright soprano.

HILARY FINCH

some nice alterations between a genial judge and a snappish, mushroom-faced gentleman whom the programme calls "prosecuting council", as well as a fair amount of tension.

The result is not quite *Witness for the Prosecution*, though. Wil-

cox is more interested in exposing prejudice and exploitation than in the guilt or innocence of any defendant. This can take the rather crude form of a police witness gratuitously telling counsel, or council, "you can't trust queer, can you?". The play is, however,

subtle when the victim of the burglary is helplessly keeping his secrets from prying legal eyes, or being blackmailed by an opportunist businessman into leaking the names of influential members of Newcastle's gay subworld.

The point seems to be that it is safe to be sexually straight, rich and very corrupt, less safe to be bent, rich and fairly corrupt, and most unsafe to be bent, poor and tempted to steal television sets. Wilcox adds the suggestion that homosexuality is more rife than theatre-going Geordies probably think. Defending counsel turns out to be a lesbian, her opponent is suspiciously hostile to what he calls "Sodom and Gomorrah", and even the judge has a gay son. There is a surprise at the ending, but not one either connected with the trial or particularly plausible in itself. Before that, though, Wilcox manages to conceal any didactic or propagandist aim with consistent skill; and his writing is peppy served by Emily Richard, Ewan Bremner, Roy Houlton, and indeed every other member of Andrew McKinnon's cast. Unique the production isn't, but a high-quality public-sector theatre provision concept, perhaps it is.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Skittish defence counsel: Emily Richard in *Green Fingers*

CONCERT

Lott/Johnson Wigmore Hall

THE first and possibly the most recherche tributes to Mozart to be offered in 1991 crept in coyly at the start of the Wigmore Hall's new year.

The reference was the Letter Song from Reynaldo Hahn's *Mozart*, a 1925 musical comedy, which certainly puts *Amadeus* in its place. The excuse was an evening devoted to songs sung by the great French singing actress, Yvonne Printemps; the reincarna-

THEATRE

Green Fingers King's Head, Islington

THIS has been brought to London by Northern Stage, a Newcastle-based company which, so the programme says, "is a unique concept in public-sector theatre provision and is charged with the task of providing high-quality theatre, utilising a diverse range of venues". Fortunately, its fare turns out to be more digestible than its syntax. The unique concept is utilising the tiny King's Head to suggest what it is like to be male, homosexual and living in Newcastle upon Tyne - and (by way of public-sector provision?) camouflage its observation as an enjoyable courtroom drama.

The author is Michael Wilcox, whose earlier *Rents* involved roughish trade in gay Edinburgh. This time, his protagonist is a young corporation gardener accused of joining his lover, a professional burglar, in looting the house of one of Newcastle's leading sugar daddies. This provides the audience with plenty of lively cross-examination and

NEW RELEASES

AIR AMERICA (15): Mel Gibson and Robert Downey Jr. as rebel pilots mixed in an offshoot of the Vietnam War. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Roger Spottiswoode. Orion West End (071-920 5252/7615).

ARCHANGEL (15): Thriller. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

DELTA FORCE 2 (18): Chuck Norris leads a team of commandos in a mission to rescue a prisoner. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Kevin Nealon. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

THE GARDEN (15): The Passion, according to Derek Jarman - a powerful, explicit, and beautiful film. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Derek Jarman. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

THE MASTY GILL (15): Pulp. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

SECRET WEDDING (15): Political thriller. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

ALMOST AN ANGEL (15): Pulp. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

BLUE STEEL (15): Thriller. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

ADAM BEEDE (15): Thriller. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

THE COUNTRY WIFE (15): Pulp. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

FIVE BAY NAMED MOIE (15): Thriller. A young man is accused of murdering a woman. Lead, criss, and demerol; director, Frank Marshall. Cannon Baker Street (071-435 9772).

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated) with the symbol (A) on release across the country.

Curse stars as a couple embroiled with a psychopathic killer.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE HOT SPOT (18): Raging sexual tension and duplicity in a key Times movie.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE NEVER-ENDING STORY PART 2 (U): A return visit to the land of Fantasia.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS (18): Rupert Everett and Nicholas Nickleby.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

FANTASIA (U): Dany's famous vocalisation of popular concert classics.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

FLATLINERS (15): Kiefer Sutherland, Julia Roberts and Kevin Costner.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

GOODFELLAS (18): Martin Scorsese's gangster epic following a New York hoodlum's rise and fall.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

HENRY AND JUNE (18): Annette Bening's passionate affair with Henry Miller in bohemia.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

HOMES ALONE (PG): Rudey kid left alone at Christmas.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

BOHÉME: Eve Fennel gamely attempts the starchy stardom of a musical.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THREE SISTERS: Three Redgravees in a starchy stardom of a musical.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE WAY OF THE CONWAYNS: Jean-Pierre L  aud and his crew.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

WHAT THE BUTLER SAW: Incest, assault and blackmail.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS: Alan Bennett's charming new version.

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated) with the symbol (A) on release across the country.

Curse stars as a couple embroiled with a psychopathic killer.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE HOT SPOT (18): Raging sexual tension and duplicity in a key Times movie.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE NEVER-ENDING STORY PART 2 (U): A return visit to the land of Fantasia.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS (18): Rupert Everett and Nicholas Nickleby.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

FANTASIA (U): Dany's famous vocalisation of popular concert classics.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

FLATLINERS (15): Kiefer Sutherland, Julia Roberts and Kevin Costner.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

GOODFELLAS (18): Martin Scorsese's gangster epic following a New York hoodlum's rise and fall.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

HENRY AND JUNE (18): Annette Bening's passionate affair with Henry Miller in bohemia.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

HOMES ALONE (PG): Rudey kid left alone at Christmas.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

BOH  ME: Eve Fennel gamely attempts the starchy stardom of a musical.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THREE SISTERS: Three Redgravees in a starchy stardom of a musical.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE WAY OF THE CONWAYNS: Jean-Pierre L  aud and his crew.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

WHAT THE BUTLER SAW: Incest, assault and blackmail.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS: Alan Bennett's charming new version.

Odessa: Kensington (071-802 644/5) Swiss Cottage (071-722 8005).

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS: Alan Bennett's charming new version.

6.00 Ceefax
8.30 BBC Breakfast News with Laurie Meyer and Jill Dando
8.50 The New Yogi Berra Show (r)
9.00 News, regional news and weather 9.05 Poppy and Son (r)
9.30 Yanomami - The Dying Tribe. A special edition of *Newsround* tells of the plight of a tribe of Amazonian Indians who have lived peacefully in the jungle for more than 10,000 years. Driven by a lust for gold, an army of miners has invaded their territory, bringing with it diseases that are wiping out the tribe.
10.00 News, regional news and weather 10.05 Playdays 10.25 Rupert.
10.35 Puddles Up. The final of the international canoeing competition
11.00 News, regional news and weather
11.05 Film: The Importance of Being Earnest (1952). Oscar Wilde's play becomes a wonderful comic vehicle for a perfectly-orchestrated cast of Michael Redgrave, Michael Denison, Dorothy Tutin, Joan Greenwood, with Edith Evans as the definitive Lady Bracknell and Margaret Rutherford as Miss Prism. Directed by Anthony Asquith 12.35 Cartoons 12.55 Regional news and weather
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Haydon. Weather 1.30 Neighbours. (Ceefax)
1.50 Film: Hotel (1987). Spirited adaptation of Arthur Hailey's blockbuster with Rod Taylor as the manager of the St Gregory in New Orleans trying to keep his head when all about him are losing theirs in a sea of blackmail, robbery, racism and revenge. The cast includes Karl Mullen, Kevin McCarthy, Mervyn Dymally and Richard Conte. Directed by Richard Quine
3.50 Corners. An informative series for children 4.05 Jackanory. Surprise is read by Victoria Wood and Denny John Jones 4.20 Fantastic Max (r) 4.30 Eye Spy. Julian Parkin hosts a new game show based on the world's intriguing and espionage, with four young contestants competing to become the master spy of today's contest
4.55 Newsround 5.05 The Watch House. Conclusion of the three-part children's ghost story by Robert Westall (r)
5.35 Neighbours (r). (Ceefax) Northern Ireland. Sportswide 5.40 Inside Later
6.00 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Chris Lowe. Weather 6.30 Regional News Magazines. Northern Ireland: Neighbourhood 7.00 Wogan with comedienne Helen Lederer. Four members of The Archers cast and, singing live for once, Mollie Vaneil
7.35 Film: Summer Rental (1985) starring John Candy, Richard Crenna and Rip Torn. Jack Cheater (Candy) needs a break. He begins to feel his job as an air traffic controller is getting to him when he starts showing landing procedures to a fly. So with his wife, three children and family dog, he sets off for a few days of well-deserved rest and relaxation in Florida. The family are blissfully unaware of the disasters that await them. Director Carl Reiner, who was responsible for Steve Martin's early films, turns in an enjoyable light-hearted comedy, but fans of old John Candy will find that the film fails to exploit his rich comic talent. (Ceefax)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Michael Buerk. (Ceefax) Regional news and weather



Witness to a murder Jessica Lundy as Nick Page (9.30pm)

9.30 Over My Dead Body. A pilot episode for a new murder-mystery series beginning next week. Edward Woodward is Max Goodall, a retired Scotland Yard inspector turned crime novelist. He is tracked down by Nick Page (Jessica Lundy), a young obituary writer for the San Francisco press who has witnessed a murder. As there are no other witnesses and no body, the police are reluctant to believe her. Although Max has other things on his mind, such as his impending divorce and an irate publisher, Nick's persistence wins him over and he regains his taste for mystery solving. (Ceefax)
11.00 Film: The Gladiator (1986). Ken Wahl, Nancy Allen and Robert Clump star in this below par made-for-television movie set in a Los Angeles in the grip of "The Skull", a homicidal maniac who likes nothing better than killing people with his "Death Car". Although heavily influenced by the *Mad Max* films this is nowhere near as innovative or entertaining. Directed by Abie Fierman
12.35am Weather

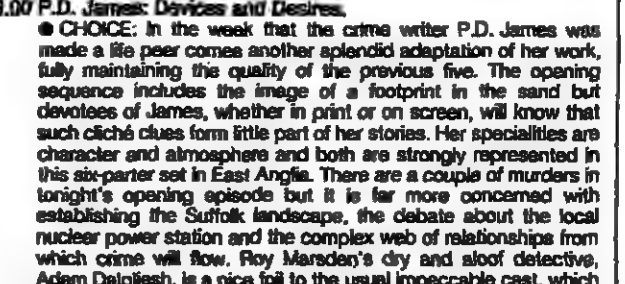
8.00 News
8.15 English Towns. Alec Clifton-Taylor visits Beverley in North Humberside (r). (Ceefax)
9.00 Tarzan and the Mermaids (1948, b/w). Tarzan (Johnny Weissmuller) lands an unexpected catch while out fishing beautiful mermaid-like girl (Jude Christian) who is fleeing her village. Directed by Robert Florey
10.05 Master Craftsmen. A profile of Alan Henshawe, a clock maker working in a remote file farmhouse (r) 10.20 How Are the Kids? Last in the series about child exploitation all over the world
10.30 The Unanswered Questions. Leonard Bernstein at Harvard. In his final lecture Bernstein concentrates on Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and conducts a complete performance of the work (r) 1.45 The Broyles. Cartoon adventure (r)
2.00 News and weather followed by Look. Stranger. What Does the Wind Do When It Isn't Blowing? John Barrett, former director of the Penobscott County State Unit, takes a walk around this rugged area of west Wales (r) 2.30 Bellamy on the Heathland. David Bellamy travels through bogs and other wetlands in search of carnivorous plants and dragons
3.00 News and weather followed by A View from the Bridge. A 40 Minutes film about Colin Greaver, a 17-year-old from County Durham who ran away from home and whose body was later recovered from the Thames (r). (Ceefax)
3.40 Holiday Outings. A report from Anne Gregg on a two-centre holiday in Tunisia 3.50 News, regional news and weather
4.00 Cheesecake. Grandfather. The story of a 73-year-old widower Faraday who set up a chess sanctuary at his home in the Transvaal (r) 4.15 Holiday Outings to Center Park, the resort with tropical temperatures at Evesham Forest in Suffolk (r)
4.20 Film: Pillow Talk (1959). First and arguably the best of the series of romantic comedies featuring the team of Doris Day, as usual playing hard to get, and Rock Hudson. Directed by Michael Curtiz
6.00 Film: Battleground Galactica (1978). Star Wars rip-off that parodied the successful television series, starring Lorne Greene and Richard L. Hay. Directed by Richard A. Colla
8.00 Cricket: Third Test. Richie Benaud with highlights of the first day's play in the game at Sydney between Australia and England



House extensions garden designer David Stevens (8.30pm)

8.30 Gardens by Design: The Extra Room.
CHOICE: David Stevens presents a six-part series which sets out to show how the garden can be treated as an extra room of the house, shaped and furnished to the owner's needs. The emphasis is less on digging and planting and rearing off Latin names than in seeing the plot as a whole. A professional garden designer who has won eight gold medals at Chelsea, Stevens obviously knows his stuff. Perhaps he knows it too well, because he tends to race through his script as if he had a train to catch. The programme takes a long time over generalities before homing in on a specific project - the redesign of a small suburban garden in London. This will be a running feature of the series and could be its most useful item, although viewers thinking of reshaping their own gardens may blench at a likely bill of up to £10,000. (Ceefax)
9.00 Monchy's Flying Circus. More lunacy with John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Eric Idle, Michael Palin and Terry Jones. (Ceefax)
9.30 The Middle of Life. Nana Warner at 60. As a curtain-raiser to the BBC festival of the music of Hans Werner Henze at the Barbican, another chance to see Simon Rattle in conversation with the composer on his sixtieth birthday in 1989 (r)
10.25 A Life in Pieces. In an interview with Ludovic Kennedy, Sir Arthur Street-Greene (Peter Cook) chooses his tenth Christmas gift
10.30 Newsnight with Jeremy Paxman
11.15 Darts. The Embassy world professional championship from the Lakeside Country Club, Frinton Green 12.15 Weather
12.20am Film: Travels with My Aunt (1972). Stodgy adaptation of Graham Greene's novel about a retired bank manager on a world trip with an eccentric aunt, enlivened by a splendid performance by Maggie Smith. With Alec McCowen. Directed by George Cukor. Ends at 2.11

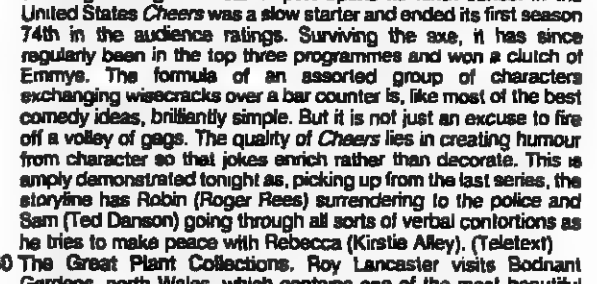
6.00 TV-am
6.25 Pope Leo Paw. Cartoon (r) 9.35 Thames News and weather
9.40 Film: Dogma - The Movie (1989). Cartoon version of *The Three Musketeers* directed by Luis Ballester
11.25 The Magic of David Copperfield. Musician David Copperfield stages an escape from the top security prison, Alcatraz (r)
12.25 Home and Away 12.55 Thames News and weather
1.00 News at One and weather 1.20 Disney Cartoon (r)
1.30 Film: The Island at the Top of the World (1974). The title promises rather than the reality, although the children might enjoy it. Donald Sinden and David Hemsley take the children to the Arctic in search of Sinden's missing son and discover a lost Viking civilisation. Directed by Robert Stevenson
3.15 News headlines 3.20 Thames News 3.25 The Young Doctors
3.55 Utterly Brilliant. Timmy Mallett dresses up in top hat and tails for a dance routine with ace dancer Rosemarie Ford 4.15 Scooby Doo. The first of a new cartoon series 4.40 Fun House. Slapstick comedy
5.10 Home and Away (r)
5.40 News. (Ceefax) and weather
5.55 The Day follows a crucial 24 hours in the life of an ordinary member of the public
6.00 6 O'Clock Live presented by Frank Bough
7.00 The 6.00 O'Clock Question. Quiz show with Bob Monkhouse.
7.20 Coronation Street. (Ceefax)
8.00 Watching. Comedy series about an ill-matched couple starring Emma Wray, Paul Brown and Liza Tarbuck. (Ceefax)
8.30 Surgical Comedy
CHOICE: Peter Leamouth's hospital comedy is back for a third series, with Nicholas McAuliffe as the imperious surgeon more than fully main thing in a man's world. Like many an American sitcom the show's basis is its speed and the quality of its wit, while McAuliffe is a fine comedy actor. Tonight's episode features his teenage son who gets a holiday job in the hospital and then picks up the jokes and gossip going on behind his mother's back. The trading of innuendo and snide helps to compensate for thinning plotting but the essence of a sitcom is that nothing really changes. Just as in the very first days, there is the hint of romance between the widowed McAuliffe and her put-upon colleague, Dr Haslam (Duncan Preston) and the trio of supporting surgeons are still on hand to provide their comic Greek chorus. (Ceefax)
9.00 P.D. James: Devices and Desires.
CHOICE: In the week that the crime writer P.D. James was made a life peer comes another splendid adaptation of her work, fully maintaining the quality of the original. The opening sequence includes the image of a footprint in the sand and devotees of James, whether in print or on screen, will know that such cliché clues form little part of her stories. Her specialities are character and atmosphere and both are strongly represented in this six-part set in East Angles. There are a couple of murders in tonight's opening episode but it is far more concerned with establishing the Suffolk landscape, the debate about the local nuclear power station and the complex web of relationships from which crime will flow. Roy Marsden's dry and aloof detective, Adam Dalglish, is a nice foil to the usual impeccable cast, which includes Susannah York, James Faulkner and Gemma Jones. (Ceefax)



Nuclear detection: Roy Marsden as Adam Dalglish (9.00pm)

10.00 News at Ten (Ceefax) and weather 10.35 LWT News and weather
10.40 Aspel in New York. Michael Aspel peeks over Patrick Litchfield's shoulder as he shoots real women in New York for the highly artistic, but not remotely pornographic, 1991 Unipart calendar
11.40 Jake and the Fatman. Unlikely crime fighting duo, one a suave district attorney, the other an overweight investigator
12.40am The Winds of War part one. Robert Mitchum, Ali McGraw and Jan Michael Vincent star in this second world war drama which follows the fortunes of the American Henry family after the attack on Pearl Harbor brings the United States into the conflict (r)
2.35 Cinema Attractions. The latest box office news from America
3.05 American College Football. Action from the Copper Bowl 4.30 Sky World. News and what to wear guide
5.00 ITN Morning News. Ends at 6.00

6.00 The Art of Landscape. Scenes of the natural world accompanied by soothing music
6.20 Business Daily
6.30 The Channel Four Daily
9.25 Sesame Street. Educational fun for pre-school children
10.25 Batman and Robin (b/w) Episode 11
10.45 The Adventures of Tintin. Part seven of *The Crab with the Golden Claws*
11.00 Things To Come (r)
11.30 Tony Jacklin's Pro Celebrity Golf Challenge. Nigel Mansell and Sam Torrance against Peter Cook and Ronnie Raftery
12.30 Business Daily. Financial and business news service
1.00 Yachting. Whitbread Round the World Race. Further highlights
2.00 Pet World. Dublin vet John Wilson assesses the value of pet therapy and advises on keeping a small snake (r)
2.30 Film: The Immortal Sergeant (1943, b/w). Inspirational second world war drama set in North Africa with Henry Fonda as a diffident Canadian corporal who leads an assault on the Germans in the Libyan desert. With Thomas Mitchell and Maureen O'Hara. Directed by John M. Stahl
4.10 The Three Stooges in *Phoney Express* (1943, b/w). Directed by Del Lord
4.30 Countdown. The first semi-final in the Championship of Champions competition hosted by Richard Whitley
5.00 Not on TV. Religious affairs magazine
5.30 American Football. First 42. Mick Luckhurst and Gary Inlay with news of the NFL and interviews with the top stars
6.00 Happy Days. More laughs from high school life in Fifties America
6.30 Tonight with Jonathan Ross. The guests are disc jockey Andy Kershaw and, providing the music, Soho
7.00 Channel 4 News. (Teletext)
7.50 First Reaction. Well-known figures from the worlds of art and entertainment talk about current issues. Followed by Weather
8.00 Brookside. Suburban soap set on Merseyside. (Teletext)
8.30 Travelog. New series of the programme for the independent traveller presented by Robert Ellis. Along with special reports given by well-known writers and travellers, there is advice and hints on how to get the most out of travel. This week Simon Hoggart of the Observer reports from Savannah, Georgia
9.00 Cheers. Love is a Reality. Really. Perfectly OK thing.
CHOICE: The Boston bar is open and ready to take the orders as the long-running American import opens its ninth series. In the United States *Cheers* was a slow starter and ended its first season 74th in the audience ratings. Surviving the axe, it has since regularly been in the top three programmes and won a clutch of Emmys. The formula of an assorted group of characters exchanging wisecracks over a bar counter is, like most of the best comedy ideas, brilliantly simple. But it is not just an excuse to fire off a volley of gags. The quality of *Cheers* lies in creating humour from character so that jokes enrich rather than decorate. This is simply demonstrated tonight as, picking up from the last series, the storyline has Robin (Roger Rees) surrendering to the police and Sam (Ted Danson) going through all sorts of verbal contortions as he tries to make peace with Rebecca (Kirstie Alley). (Teletext)
9.30 The Great Plant Collections. Roy Lancaster visits Badminton Gardens, North Wales, which contains one of the most beautiful collections of rhododendrons and azaleas in the British Isles (r). (Teletext)
10.00 The Golden Girls. New series with the Miami matrons and their wit one-liners. An old flame visits Rose and rekindles the romance that ended when he left to join Spike Jones's band. (Teletext)
10.30 A Shoe Fetishist's Guide to Bruce Morton. The young Scottish comedian finds humour and insecurity in sexual fetishism, the paranormal and Glasgow chip shops.
11.00 The Word. Amanda de Cadogan and Terry Christian with what is hot and what is not in the world of music, entertainment, film and fashion
12.00 Danceadeze recorded at London's Brixton Academy
1.00am Film: Daughters of Darkness (1970). Weirdly atmospheric vampire shocker starring Delia Phoenix as a murderous lesbian countess who dresses like Marlene Dietrich. Directed by Harry Kumel. Ends at 2.55



Making his peace verbally: Ted Danson as Sam (9.00pm)

10.00 The Big Man. Lame Neeson stars as a teacher who, after being rescued from a prison spell for assault, takes up bare knuckle boxing
1.05am Sky News. Double (1984). A porno graphic actress (Melanie Griffith) is used to share a killer
1.15 The Unsubscribable (1987). A movie starring Al Capone and the mob, starring Sam Connery. Ends at 4.25

TV VARIATIONS

ANGLOIA
 As London except: 6.10pm-6.40 Keds and Dog 6.40-6.50 News 6.55-7.00 News 7.00-7.10 News 7.15-7.20 News 7.25-7.30 News 7.35-7.40 News 7.45-7.50 News 7.55-8.00 News 8.05-8.10 News 8.15-8.20 News 8.25-8.30 News 8.35-8.40 News 8.45-8.50 News 8.55-9.00 News 9.05-9.10 News 9.15-9.20 News 9.25-9.30 News 9.35-9.40 News 9.45-9.50 News 9.55-10.00 News 10.05-10.10 News 10.15-10.20 News 10.25-10.30 News 10.35-10.40 News 10.45-10.50 News 10.55-11.00 News 11.05-11.10 News 11.15-11.20 News 11.25-11.30 News 11.35-11.40 News 11.45-11.50 News 11.55-12.00 News 12.05-12.10 News 12.15-12.20 News 12.25-12.30 News 12.35-12.40 News 12.45-12.50 News 12.55-1.00 News 1.05-1.10 News 1.15-1.20 News 1.25-1.30 News 1.35-1.40 News 1.45-1.50 News 1.55-2.00 News 2.05-2.10 News 2.15-2.20 News 2.25-2.30 News 2.35-2.40 News 2.45-2.50 News 2.55-3.00 News 3.05-3.10 News 3.15-3.20 News 3.25-3.30 News 3.35-3.40 News 3.45-3.50 News 3.55-4.00 News 4.05-4.10 News 4.15-4.20 News 4.25-4.30 News 4.35-4.40 News 4.45-4.50 News 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Tory council leaders attack Heseltine over poll tax review

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

CONSERVATIVE local government leaders have accused Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, of refusing to meet them informally to discuss the government's review of the poll tax.

Senior Tories in the local authority associations say that Mr Heseltine has insisted that contacts must be through official meetings and that he has rebuffed invitations to hold private talks.

Although the Conservative party is organising two national meetings at which councillors will be able to put their views to Mr Heseltine, the senior Tories in the local government groups want a "fireside chat" with the minister. The Tory council leaders argue that as the reform of the poll tax is crucial to the party's electoral survival at both national and local level, Mr Heseltine should talk directly to them rather than using formal channels.

They point out that Labour local government leaders work closely with their party's front-bench spokesmen and have urged Mr Heseltine to let them help in his search for a solution to the poll tax problem. The leaders say that, having borne the brunt of oppo-

sition to the tax, they now want to ensure that any modifications or replacements do not put them in an even worse position.

Although many local government Tories bitterly disagreed with the introduction of the poll tax, nearly all have loyally defended it, in some cases at considerable cost to their own political careers. "Considering all that we have done to bring in the community charge, and the losses we suffered in last May's local elections, it smacks of ingratitude not to even hear what we have to say," one senior Tory said.

Another added: "So far it has all been done very formally by consulting officers at official level. He is just not talking to local government leaders in his own party. It is not absolutely surprising. His relationship with local government, particularly its national leaders, was not all that easy the last time he was environment secretary."

Richard Holt, MP for Lang-baugh, who chairs the Conservative party's national local government advisory committee, said he was astonished that any senior Tories felt their voice was not being heard. The party is holding a national meeting of Conservative council leaders in Birmingham on January 18 which will be attended by Mr Heseltine and Michael Portillo, the local government minister.

Mr Holt, who will chair the gathering and a meeting of the 120 members of his committee with Mr Heseltine the following week in Coventry, said: "Anyone who wants to air their views can come along. If anyone has a beef I can get them in to see Michael Heseltine. There is no problem in fixing up a meeting."

"But he will not, for example, be meeting all of his 380 colleagues in the House of Commons on a personal basis. In the 16 years that I have been on the local government committee there has never been such an opportunity for influencing the local government decision-making process."

David Blunkett, Labour's local government spokesman, said: "Far be it for me to interfere in an internal Conservative party disagreement but a politically acceptable solution to the problem of local government finance will not be achieved purely through formal structures."

"It would be very surprising indeed if the Conservative party's local government leadership did not have a view on the catastrophe of the poll tax which has wreaked such havoc on those they represent and on their own party."



Dizzy heights: student pilots watch as Chinese women undergo daily wheel drills during training at a military academy of the country's air force at Changchun

A hard year for the royal family firm

Continued from page 1
cords, in any case, show no let-up on the part of the people who incontestably rank as the most engaging family in Britain. During the 1980s the royal family doubled its number of official engagements. Last year's total showed a slight setback, falling slightly short of 1989's 3,196 engagements in the United Kingdom, but it was accomplished despite the handicap of the Prince of Wales's polo accident.

The Duchess of York also undertook fewer engagements in 1990, because of the birth of Princess Eugenie in March. As a serving Royal Navy officer, the Duke of York can also carry out few official engagements. Prince Edward, though establishing a career in the theatre, often found time at weekends to undertake engagements.

Princess Margaret had a notably busier official diary in 1990. Many of her engagements were as president of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Boy who killed child gets indefinite term

By KERRY GILL

A BOY aged 12 was detained indefinitely yesterday for battering a three-year-old with stones and then drowning him in a stream. The boy, who cannot be named, attacked the child, Jamie Campbell, as he played in a stream in the Drumchapel area of Glasgow.

Lord Sutherland, passing sentence at the High Court in Edinburgh, said: "It appears to have been a deliberate assault leading to the death of a three-year-old child with no discernible motive except out of sheer wickedness."

During an earlier hearing at the High Court in Glasgow, the boy was cleared of murder but found guilty of culpable homicide.

Jamie was being cared for by relatives after his mother died in a fire, the court was told. Last August, he had been playing near his grandmother's home, and witnesses saw him with an older boy answering the description of the accused near the Garscadden burn. Two women subsequently found Jamie lying face down over

a large stone with his head in the water. He had been drowned and had 14 wounds to his head and neck.

Donald Findlay, QC, for the defence, said yesterday: "The boy, although 12 years of age, is clearly somebody who in reality is but an infant in his attitudes and in many of his stages of development. He is a young lad who clearly needs some help. My fear would be that if you impose an open-ended order it gives the lad no hope at all."

Lord Sutherland said that, although it would normally be most unusual to detain a young child for a long time, the circumstances were very disturbing. Psychiatric reports had indicated a "potential personality disorder". An indeterminate sentence would enable the boy's development to be monitored, he said.

Robert Gallagher, Jamie's uncle and adoptive father, said the child should have been named. "He is a danger to the public and they will never know who he is."

UDR Four enquiry is reopened

THE campaign for the release of four Ulster Defence Regiment soldiers, jailed for life in 1986 for the murder of a Roman Catholic, took another step forward yesterday with the announcement of a new investigation into police notes (Edward Gorman writes).

In a statement, the RUC said a preliminary report on forensic tests carried out on police notes of interviews with the soldiers suggested that further investigation of certain points was required.

The decision was welcomed by Peter Robinson MP, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist party, who is among those campaigning for the soldiers' release. "The statement from the RUC today is but the harbinger of what is to come. The clanging of the keys to release these men can now be heard," he said.

James Hagan, Noel Bell, Winston Allen and Neil Latimer, known as the Armagh or UDR Four, were all involved, according to the Crown, in the shooting of Adrian Carroll in Armagh in November 1983.

Iraqi threats led to diplomats' expulsion

Continued from page 1
following Iraq's expulsion last year of a British embassy press officer in Baghdad.

Baghdad seems likely to retaliate by expelling some of the three British diplomats and three support staff who have stayed behind. The source said this would be "entirely unjustified" and pointed out that Iraq had far more people in Britain than Britain had in Iraq.

After the eight Iraqis have gone, there will still be 15 diplomats and 17 support staff at its embassy, and between 5,000 and 6,000 other Iraqi residents throughout Britain.

The remaining staff at the British embassy in Baghdad consists of Harold Walker, the ambassador, his deputy, a management officer, two security officers and a communications officer.

The Iraqi diplomats ordered to leave were named as Nattiq Bakir, assistant press officer; Naif Abdul-Jabbar Hassan, press officer; Hussein Muhammad Jadoue, third secretary; Luai Sedik Mahdi, attaché; Mudhafar Mohammed Mahmoud, assistant

cultural adviser; Salih Faraj Mohammad, first secretary; and Kamel Khurshid Murad, assistant press officer. The security guard was Mihsein Nashmi Hamdi.

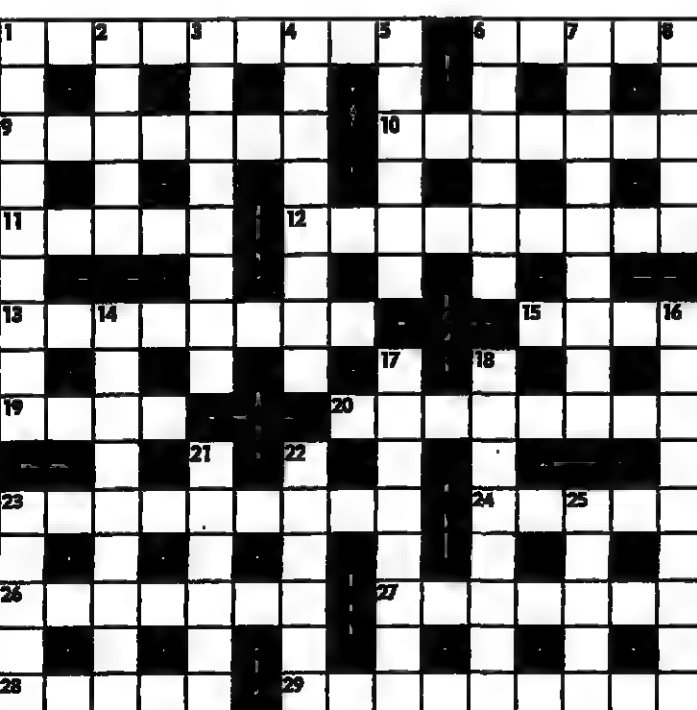
Veteran members of the Iraqi community in Britain yesterday welcomed the expulsion of 75 of their number, saying that they regarded any move against the regime of President Saddam Hussein as a positive step.

Latif Kubba and Sayed Jawad, engineering graduates who have been in Britain for 18 and 14 years respectively, said they accepted the government's explanation for the expulsions. "Britain is tightening its grip on Iraq's intelligence agents in Britain in case of war," said Mr Kubba.

Mr Mohammed, the first secretary, denied that he had made any public threat.

Azmi al-Salibi, the Iraqi ambassador, was summoned to the Foreign Office to be told of the expulsions by David Gore-Booth, an undersecretary responsible for Middle East affairs. He expressed his regrets at the expulsions.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,494



ACROSS

- 1 Girl's prayer-book in the boot (9).
- 6 Spring crop up? (5).
- 9 Left statue unfinished in colonnade (7).
- 10 Cheese-roll on, but not for long (7).
- 11 Revolving disc in kick-start device? (5).
- 12 Spring shorter? No, unlimited! (9).
- 13 A French gathering outside normal hours (8).
- 15 House with stable? (4).
- 19 Point-to-point at College (4).
- 20 Take Greek letter separately, in a thoughtful way (8).
- 23 South-east, by zonal accident, snail is found (9).

DOWN

- 2 Central post held up in flight (5).
- 26 Retreat or study fitted with air outlet (7).
- 27 Ovid was at odds to contradict (7).
- 28 Tobacco tin dated (5).
- 29 Ahab's man - individual right behind Marx? (9).
- 1 Leaving change? (9).
- 2 Trifle brings up skin blemishes (5).
- 3 Private address? (8).
- 4 Production of manifest on vessel (8).
- 5 Party effort (6).
- 6 Light rollers? (6).
- 7 Note contribution for decorating book-edges (9).
- 8 English poet in two minds? (5).
- 14 Sudden attack to be made on character in a bar (9).
- 16 Nurseryman's guarded forecast for the cowslip, say? (9).
- 17 Surface right for an alien (8).
- 18 No knife's employed in making reindeer boots (8).
- 21 Protest with end in view (6).
- 22 Grab a bit of air (6).
- 23 Place where something happened - insect lost its tail (5).
- 25 Made in mill with small kiln (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,493

SHARP ALBATROSS
RADIATION AGENT
POSTER OFFER
IMPRUDENCE PAUSE
NAIL EXTRA
HANDSOME ASLEEP
LEAVE TEMPORISE
TREATMENT EASED

Concise Crossword, page 13

By Philip Howard

BARD BODS

- JESSICA
a. A bawdy landlady
b. An unfortunate Scottish coastguard
c. A runaway helmsman
BOLINGROKE
a. A secret passage
b. A venal hangman
c. A bosom companion of Hotspur
CALPURNIA
a. Cornelia's mother
b. Caesar's wife
c. Mark Antony's wife
PHILOSTRATE
a. Companion of Pericles
b. Former chum of Titus
c. An Athenian impresario

Answers on page 16

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C London (within N & S Circles) 731
M-ways/roads M4-M1 732
M-ways/roads M1-Carlisle 733
M-ways/roads Carlisle-TM2 734
M-ways/roads TM2-M4 735
M25 London Orbital only 736
National traffic and roadworks
National motorways 737
West Country 738
Wales 739
Midlands 740
East Angles 741
North-west England 742
North-east England 743
Scotland 744
Northern Ireland 745
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WEATHER

This evening, heavy rain will spread into Northern Ireland, Wales, western England and western Scotland. The heaviest showers will be in the North and the West, and may turn thundery. Eastern England will be brightest. Showers will turn wintry with sleet in the South, perhaps snow on hills, and snow in the North. Gales in the West and the North. Outlook: wet and windy, but becoming brighter with showers.

ABROAD

MIDDAY: 1=thunder; 2=drizzle; 3=gale; 4=sun; 5=clear; 6=rain; 7=cloud; 8=wind; 9=light; 10=heavy

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Max	Min
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10

These are Wednesday's figures

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0898 500 followed by the appropriate code.

LONDON

Yesterday: p. max 6 am to 6 pm 5C (41F), min 6 pm to 6 am 7C (45F). Humidity 6 pm, 89 per cent. Rain 24 hr to 6 pm 0.2 in. Sun 24 hr to 6 pm 0.8 hr. Bar. mean sea level, 6 pm, 999.8 mb. min 999.5 mb. 1.00 mb = 29.53 in.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Wednesday: Highest day temp. London, 13C (55F). Lowest day temp. Salisbury, near Glasgow, 1C (34F). Highest night temp. London, 13C (55F). Lowest night temp. Salisbury, near Glasgow, 1C (34F).

MANCHESTER

Yesterday: Temp. max 6 am to 6 pm 7C (45F), min 6 pm to 6 am 5C (41F). Humidity 6 pm, 89 per cent. Rain 24 hr to 6 pm 0.2 in. Sun 24 hr to 6 pm 0.8 hr. Bar. mean sea level, 6 pm, 999.8 mb. min 999.5 mb. 1.00 mb = 29.53 in.

GLASGOW

Yesterday: Temp. max 6 am to 6 pm 5C (41F), min 6 pm to 6 am 7C (45F). Humidity 6 pm, 89 per cent. Rain 24 hr to 6 pm 0.2 in. Sun 24 hr to 6 pm 0.8 hr. Bar. mean sea level, 6 pm, 999.8 mb. min 999.5 mb. 1.00 mb = 29.53 in.

AROUND BRITAIN

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Max	Min
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
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Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
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TEMPERATURES AT MIDDAY YESTERDAY

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Max	Min
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
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Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
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Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10

These are Wednesday's figures

TEMPERATURES AT MIDDAY YESTERDAY

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Max	Min
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10
Abertawe	13	10	10	15	10

These are Wednesday's figures

TEMPERATURES AT MIDDAY YESTERDAY

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● MOTORING 25
● LAW 26
● SPORT 26-30

BUSINESS

FRIDAY JANUARY 4 1991

Executive Editor
David Brewerton

Haulier's collapse threatens 800 jobs

By ROSS TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ABOUT 800 jobs are under threat after the appointment of administrative receivers to John Dee Group, the road haulage and warehousing company.

Miles Middleton, of Cork Gully, one of the joint receivers appointed by Lloyds Bank yesterday at the request of John Dee's directors, said the group is expected to show a deficiency.

John Dee, which is owned by John Davison, its chairman, is based in Ferryhill, County Durham. It has branches nationwide and owns about 600 tractor units and rigid lorries, and more than 1,000 trailers.

Mr Middleton said John Dee companies had distribution contracts with Comet, the

electrical retailer; Magnet, the furniture company; and Courage, the brewer, among others.

The group has 11 active companies, all of which are now administered by Mr Middleton or Gordon Goldie of the Newcastle office of Cork Gully, the insolvency arm of Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, the accountant. In some subsidiaries local partners of Cork Gully have also been made joint receivers.

Mr Middleton intends to continue trading the businesses until their viability has been assessed. He said he believed some of the John Dee subsidiaries were trading profitably, and that he hoped to be able to sell those parts of the group as going concerns.

"Some of the contracts appear to have been quite profitable," he said. However,

he had yet to form a view on the profitability of John Dee's general haulage and warehousing activities.

Mr Middleton indicated that the use of overdrafts to finance rapid expansion of the group by acquisition over the past two to three years lay at the heart of its difficulties. In 1986, John Dee had a turnover of £3.5 million. Last year, sales were £35 million, placing it among the 40 largest hauliers in Britain.

John Dee's downfall is the clearest signal yet that the road haulage industry, widely regarded as a sensitive barometer of economic activity, is having a bumpy ride.

According to a survey last month by the Freight Transport Association, almost a quarter of Britain's operators of heavy goods vehicles expect

to cut their fleets this year.

More than 1,000 hauliers are believed to have gone out of business last year and analysts say many more face bankruptcy. Companies that serve the construction, do-it-yourself and white goods sectors have been particularly hard hit.

Hauliers have also been hurt by dearer fuel since the invasion of Kuwait and the high cost of borrowing. Because of heavy investment in recent years, Britain now has the youngest "lorry park" in Europe.

A transport association spokesman said: "I would think there are an awful lot of hauliers out there who are having a tough time. There have been a lot of receiverships among smaller companies."

Storehouse warning adds to gloom in high street

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

A PROFITS warning from Storehouse, the British Home Stores, Mothercare and Habitat group, is the latest evidence of the recession in the high street.

Michael Julien, the chief executive of the group, said that although sales to date remain ahead of last time, it is unlikely that profit, before tax and exceptional items, for the year to end-March would exceed last year's figure of £32.6 million. The shares fell 3p to 110p.

Storehouse, in common with other retailers, had a poor November and a slow start to December, but, while sales for last month as a whole were in line with 1989, it was not enough to make up lost ground.

Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles merchandise sold well as did co-ordinated lingerie and casualwear in BHS, but the

group is taking a cautious view of the next three months. A spokesman said: "Trading is not disastrous, but we feel it is prudent to be cautious." Ratners Group, the jeweller, is one of the few retailers to see an increase in like-for-like sales during Christmas, but the growth was below the group's expectations.

Ratners and Zales both saw sales grow 17 per cent on a like-for-like basis. H Samuel saw growth of 13 per cent and Sterling, the American business which incorporates J. Lewis, Ratners' recent American acquisition, saw sales rise 6 per cent.

Ratners said that while the Christmas sales were below best expectations, the directors were confident, that barring unforeseen circumstances, the group will exceed last year's pre-tax profit of £121.5 million.

Gary O'Brien, the finance director, said that Kay was on target to make profits of £10 million this year. Analysts have cut their forecasts for Ratners for next year from about £180 million to about £150 million. Ratners' shares rose 7p to 165p.

During Christmas, Ratners distributed 400,000 of its £50 vouchers free with every £150 spent. The vouchers are

redeemable between February and August. But, even so, it was a low-ticket Christmas for Ratners in line with most other retail groups. The average ticket price at Ratners and H Samuel fell to just below £20. Sales of jewellery boxes and gifts were strong, as were sales of Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles watches.

Argos confirmed that shoppers had bought less expensive gifts this Christmas. Of the group's 20 best selling lines, most fell between £8 and £18. Barbie doll and Batman sold well in Argos shops and six of the top 20 lines were Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles merchandise.

Ratners is attempting to buy seven of the Easthope and Co shops. This jewellery chain, which was formerly Next Jewellers, went into receivership on New Year's eve with the loss of 350 jobs.

Next has reclaimed 47 of the Easthope stores against which it had a charge and a spokesman for the group said it had been inundated with offers, including some for the entire chain.

Easthope owed Next £2.5 million. Shares in Next fell to 12½p but later closed unchanged at 13½p.

Comment, page 21

IMI takes control of Mint with 57% stake

IMI, the engineering group, has bought control of Birmingham Mint, its bid quarry, with the purchase of £1.4 million-worth of shares, or about 10.5 per cent of the share capital, in the market.

The bidder now claims control of about 57 per cent of Birmingham Mint, which makes coins and tokens, although the offer has not gone unconditionally because the latest share purchases are not yet registered in IMI's name. The first closing date is 3pm today.

Tony Cross, chairman of Birmingham Mint, could give no advice to his shareholders other than to await a statement due today after a meeting with financial advisers. The board has vigorously rejected the final £13.6 million approach from IMI and has said that it would continue to resist even if acceptances passed the 50 per cent level. But there was no indication whether it would be confirming this stand.

Birmingham Mint took the unprecedented step this week of naming an acceptance price of 110p against a 95p share on offer from IMI after the failure of talks at this level with a potential "white knight".



Smiling through: Langdon chairman, left, and Tom Wrigley, chief executive

FNFC profits slump 49%

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE impact of high interest rates on homeowners has been shown in a 49 per cent slump in pre-tax profits to £36.4 million at First National Finance Corporation (FNFC), the mortgage lender and finance house, in the year to end-October.

Richard Langdon, FNFC's chairman, said the group's bad debt provisions were £38 million higher than they would normally expect. In all, provisions of £53 million were written off against profits, compared with about £12 million in 1989, excluding suspended interest payments.

Despite the fall in profits, the group is holding its final

dividend at 8.5p, to make an unchanged dividend of 13p for the year.

FNFC's figures were at the bottom end of expectations, and marked a sharp downturn from the group's first-half profit of £29 million. They were taken by analysts as another indicator of the severity of the problems hitting the clearing banks.

FNFC has outstanding loans of £1.4 billion to 400,000 domestic customers, with Mr Langdon said, most of the provisions being made against debts from professional firms in the Southeast of England who took out their loans when interest rates were at their lowest in the mid-

Eighties. Despite the recession, FNFC lent £200 million in the year, much of it on home improvement.

"It is good business," said Mr Langdon. "We are gaining an advantage on some of our competitors who are not lending."

The biggest fall came at the bank's property division, where profits fell 83 per cent to £1.82 million. FNFC sold 180 houses in the year, the same as in 1989, but reduced its margins to move stock.

Mr Langdon said FNFC had looked at several financial acquisitions in the year including British Credit Trust, the Bank of Ireland subsidiary, but had rejected them all.

Strong pound boosted by ERM pledge

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE pound has continued to advance, buoyed by the Chancellor's new year pledges on inflation and the exchange-rate mechanism, and by the Bundesbank's decision to leave German lending rates unchanged.

At its best, the currency climbed above DM2.91, the strongest it has been since late November, despite Treasury official reserves figures which indicated greater than expected Bank of England support for the pound in December.

The underlying fall of \$225 million in the foreign exchange reserves, after an \$85 million decline in November, illustrated the difficulty the government would have had in meeting demands for a base rate cut last month.

Simon Briscoe, UK economist at Midland Montagu, noted that if the initial \$393 million proceeds of the electricity privatisation were taken into consideration, the scale of intervention to bolster sterling was considerable.

But the gains the pound has made this week have split City opinion over the chances of a base rate cut before the setting of annual mortgage rates at the end of this month.

Neil MacKinnon, chief economist at Yamaichi Securities, said that an early base rate cut was "completely out of the question" with the pound at the bottom of ERM.

Mr Briscoe saw the more aggressive intervention for the pound last month as explaining Mr Lamont's reluctance to cut rates. But, assuming sterling has now advanced under its own steam, Mr Briscoe saw scope for a base rate cut this month.

Jim O'Neill, foreign exchange analyst at Swiss Bank Corp, foresaw the pound probably reaching DM2.95, its central rate within the ERM. However, given Mr Lamont's commitments on ERM, he saw no chance of lower interest rates before February.

Sir Alan Walters, former economic adviser to Mrs Thatcher, meanwhile called for a devaluation of the pound rather than risk increasing interest rates to as much as 18 per cent. Speaking on BBC Radio 4, he said realigning the pound downwards by 10 to 15 per cent was one solution.

Government to fund study for clean power from coal

By OUR INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE energy department is to fund a feasibility study for a 320 megawatt low pollution, high efficiency, coal burning power station.

Approval for the research is the first fruit of increasingly focused government support for the development of technologies that could allow British-mined coal to compete with gas-to-fuel new power generation projects.

The government remains hopeful that it can privatise the British Coal Corporation. However, removal of restrictions on the use of natural gas for power generation has led to a spate of projects, some already under construction, to build gas fired power stations.

Natural gas stations are expected to generate power at 2.5p a unit, compared with more than 3.5p a unit for the

best existing coal stations. Gas-fired plants also produce far fewer emissions.

The feasibility study, costing £90,000, will be directed by a working group including John Brown Engineering of Clydebank, British Gas and British Coal. They will provide free technical assistance under an initial 12-month agreement.

Foster Wheeler Energy, the international engineering and construction company of Reading, Berkshire, will undertake the pilot study. The purpose is to investigate the design and economics of an integrated gasification combined cycle plant. If the study shows sufficient commercial promise, the contract may be extended to develop a 650 mw generating station.

The integrated gasification

design will rely upon the successful combination of two existing technologies.

British Gas, in partnership with Luft of Germany, has developed a low-pollution process that extracts clean gas from coal. This will be married to John Brown's combined cycle turbine technology, which enables waste heat from a main gas-fired turbine to assist power generation from a secondary turbine, improving heat conversion efficiency. Energy department projections suggest an integrated gasification plant could achieve a thermal efficiency of 45 per cent, compared to 37 per cent for the best existing coal stations, and 46-47 per cent expected of gas plants under construction.

Home fires burning, page 21

SFO drops de Spretter charges

By OUR CITY STAFF

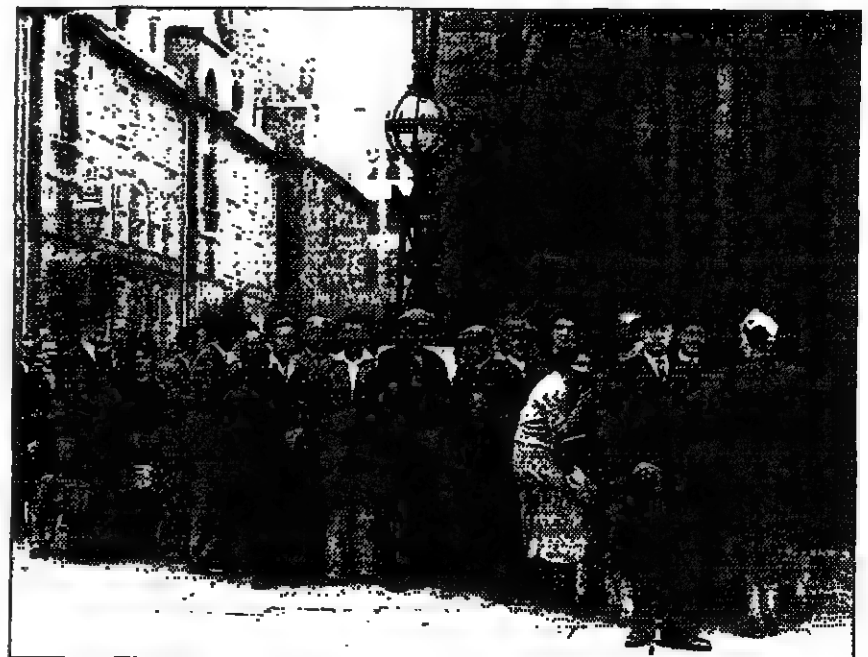
THE Serious Fraud Office has withdrawn all fraud charges against Dean Byron de Spretter, the former head of de Spretter Futures & Options.

Mr de Spretter is likely to start proceedings against the fraud office for wrongful arrest according to his lawyers, Mailish & Co.

All six charges of fraudulent trading relating to Mr de Spretter and a former associate have been dropped and their legal costs will be paid out of central funds by order of Bow Street Magistrates Court.

The fraud office started its investigations in the summer of 1988 and laid charges more than two years later. The fraud office declined comment on any impending action by Mr de Spretter.

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German mark
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Exchange index
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STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1648.5 (-7.2)
FT-SE 100
2117.8 (-10.5)
New York Dow Jones
2591.58 (-19.06)
Major indices and
major changes Page 22

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 14%
3-month interbank 14-13½%
3-month eligible bills 13½-13%
US: Prime Rate 9½%
Federal Funds 7½%
3-month Treasury Bills 6.45-6.44%
30-year bonds 105½-107

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£ \$1.9475
DM £2.9067
FF £2.4675
¥ £160.51
Sfr £1.3300
Ecu £0.704177
US \$ £0.642097
Sfr £1.357074

GOLD

London Fixing:
AM \$386.75 pm-\$386.30
close \$386.00-386.50 (£198.25-198.75)
New York:
Comex \$387.25-387.75

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jan) \$25.00 bbl (\$26.80)
* Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

	Jan	Feb	Mar
Australia \$	2.50	2.45	2.40
Austria S	21.40	20.00	19.75
Belgium F	36.75	35.75	35.75
Canada C	2.50	2.45	2.40
Denmark Kr	11.68	10.98	10.98
Finland Mk	7.39	6.94	6.94
France F	10.28	9.98	9.98
Germany DM	3.05	2.95	2.95
Hong Kong \$	15.85	14.85	14.85
Ireland P	1.14	1.07	1.07
Italy Lit	2285	2145	2145
Japan Yen	274	268	268
Netherlands Gld	3.417	3.207	3.207
Norway Kr	11.88	11.18	11.18
Portugal Esc	260.50	253.50	253.50
Spain Ptas	161.50	157.50	157.50
Sweden Kr	11.39	10.71	10.71
Switzerland Fr	2.67	2.61	2.61
Turkey Lira	500	500	500
USA \$	2.035	1.915	1.915
Yugoslavia Dnr	30.00	23.00	23.00

Rates for small denomination bank only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers cheques.
Retail Price Index: 130.0 (November)

Staff error costs the boss £780,000

By MARTIN WALLER

PETER Gummer, chairman of Shandwick, the world's largest communications agency, is now effectively £780,000 poorer as a result of a legal error by mercifully unnamed company employees.

On December 5, at the company's annual meeting, Mr Gummer, whose brother, John Gummer, was a recent chairman of the Conservative party, announced that he was selling two million of his shares to the trustees of Shandwick's first ever Employee Share Ownership Plan, at the then market price of 90p, for a total of £1.8 million.

Since then the price has plummeted. Shandwick yesterday revealed that "due to an oversight in the preparation of the legal documentation" the entire deal had

had to be renegotiated at a lower price. Mr Gummer is now selling just 1.25 million of his shares to the ownership plan at 51p, at which price the block he had first meant to sell would have been worth just £1.02 million, to meet a pressing tax bill. The price slid an additional 3p to 48p yesterday.

Anthony Stoddart, deputy chairman of Shandwick, blamed "a lack of communication" for the oversight. "No one particularly is to blame. There's no question of legal action," he said.

The error, the responsibility of the group itself rather than one of its financial advisers, occurred when one of the host of legal documents needed for the share sale was not put in place.

"It was a small formality," said Mr Stoddart. "Other things being equal, it was something that could have been

overlooked and rectified." But he conceded that the sale could not legally have proceeded without the mistake being corrected.

The trustees to the share ownership plan were not obliged to accept the previous price, given the subsequent fall, and would probably have been in breach of their fiduciary duty had they chosen to do so.

Ironically, one of the reasons for that fall was the very news that Mr Gummer was selling almost a third of his holding, as well as the difficult conditions in the agency sector.

Mr Gummer is now also transferring 419,000 shares over to his personal pension fund, and the proceeds of the two sales will meet his capital gains tax liabilities incurred from an earlier share placing.

Investors force chief to go as Westport profits fall

By MARTIN BARROW

Matched bargain trading

(430)	420	32	41	53	12	34	2
	460	12	22	35	29	52	1
Wicks & Hays	390	35	52	58	4	9	
(358)	360	17	30	40	16	22	2
	360	6	18	25	57	36	4
Tyco	200	31	38	44	2	4	4
(227)	220	15	23	29	5	8	8
	240	8	12	19	15	19	1
Thomas Wtr.	230	41	-	-	1	-	-
(270)	240	32	36	42	2	5	-
	260	14	23	28	5	13	-

diversified portfolio.

Austria	127.24	0.4	—
Belgium	889.9	0.5	—
Canada	419.9	-0.2	—
Denmark	1037.6	0.4	—
Finland	84.6	-0.3	—
(free)	85.0	0.1	—

WORLD MAR

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MARKET INDICES

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Nigel, bearing more resemblance to Dan Dare than any former inhabitant of 11 Downing Street, will appear in posters and a cartoon.

Index	Value	Daily share (\$)	Yearly share (\$)	Daily share (€)	Yearly share (€)	Daily share (¥)	Yearly share (¥)	Daily share (RMB)	Yearly share (RMB)	Index	Value	Daily share (\$)	Yearly share (\$)	Daily share (€)	Yearly share (€)	Daily share (¥)	Yearly share (¥)	Daily share (RMB)	Yearly share (RMB)
The World (free)	569.6	-0.1	-32.6	0.0	-23.5	0.0	-18.7	France	572.7	1.0	-29.2	1.4	-25.0	1.1	-14.5				
EAFE (free)	108.7	-0.1	-32.6	0.0	-23.4	0.0	-18.7	Germany	672.4	0.1	-26.7	0.5	-22.0	0.3	-11.6				
Europe (free)	980.0	0.1	-37.0	0.1	-31.3	0.3	-24.0	Hong Kong	1902.2	-0.9	-14.2	-0.8	3.3	-0.7	5.5				
Nth America	100.0	0.1	-37.1	0.2	-31.4	0.3	-24.1	Italy	254.7	0.4	-33.9	0.8	-29.3	0.5	-20.3				
Nordic (free)	587.7	-0.2	-22.8	0.0	-20.0	-0.1	-6.6	Japan	8317.5	0.6	-46.2	0.0	-39.9	0.7	-36.1				
	127.3	-0.5	-23.5	0.3	-19.6	-0.1	-6.1	Netherlands	734.5	-0.6	-22.3	-0.2	-17.4	-0.5	-8.3				
	411.7	-0.5	-23.2	-0.4	-17.7	-0.4	-7.7	New Zealand	61.7	0.3	-48.9	0.4	-39.4	0.5	-39.5				
	1055.8	-0.3	-32.2	-0.4	-28.9	-0.2	-18.2	Norway	100.1	-3.5	-10.4	-3.5	-14.4	-3.5	-8.5				
	173.2	-0.2	-26.6	0.3	-21.1	-0.1	-11.2	Sing/Malaysia	199.1	-2.9	-19.2	-2.9	-13.4	-2.8	-2.3				
	2178.5	0.4	-46.1	0.1	-38.2	0.5	-33.7	Spain	1444.5	-1.9	-27.6	-1.7	-19.9	-1.8	-12.6				
	316.5	0.5	-45.6	0.1	-39.0	0.5	-33.7	Sweden	180.0	-0.6	-32.4	-0.5	-28.2	-0.5	-18.4				
	227.0	-1.0	-34.6	-1.4	-30.0	-0.8	-21.1	Switzerland (free)	1104.5	0.4	-37.0	0.2	-31.3	0.5	-24.0				
	1272.4	0.4	-14.4	0.7	-8.9	0.5	3.3		161.3	0.5	-33.4	0.3	-27.3	0.6	-19.6				
	889.5	0.5	-22.9	0.8	-25.9	0.7	-14.3		701.1	-1.4	-23.9	0.7	-24.0	-1.2	-7.6				
	419.9	-0.2	-30.1	-0.3	-15.9	0.0	-15.6		108.8	-1.4	-23.6	-0.8	-24.2	-1.3	-7.7				
	1037.5	0.4	-21.2	0.4	-16.9	0.5	-4.9		68.3	-0.6	-19.4	-0.6	-18.4	-0.5	-6.5				
	84.5	0.3	-44.1	-0.4	-38.9	-0.2	-32.5		372.5	-0.5	-22.9	0.4	-7.0	-0.4	-7.0				
	85.0	0.1	-43.0	0.0	-38.7	0.2	-31.2												

(€): Local currency. Source: Morgan Stanley Capital International.

1989/91		1990/91		1991/92		1992/93		1993/94		1994/95		1995/96		1996/97		1997/98		1998/99		1999/00		2000/01		2001/02		2002/03		2003/04		2004/05		2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27		2027/28		2028/29		2029/30		2030/31		2031/32		2032/33		2033/34		2034/35		2035/36		2036/37		2037/38		2038/39		2039/40		2040/41		2041/42		2042/43		2043/44		2044/45		2045/46		2046/47		2047/48		2048/49		2049/50		2050/51		2051/52		2052/53		2053/54		2054/55		2055/56		2056/57		2057/58		2058/59		2059/60		2060/61		2061/62		2062/63		2063/64		2064/65		2065/66		2066/67		2067/68		2068/69		2069/70		2070/71		2071/72		2072/73		2073/74		2074/75		2075/76		2076/77		2077/78		2078/79		2079/80		2080/81		2081/82		2082/83		2083/84		2084/85		2085/86		2086/87		2087/88		2088/89		2089/90		2090/91		2091/92		2092/93		2093/94		2094/95		2095/96		2096/97		2097/98		2098/99		2099/00		2100/01		2101/02		2102/03		2103/04		2104/05		2105/06		2106/07		2107/08		2108/09		2109/10		2110/11		2111/12		2112/13		2113/14		2114/15		2115/16		2116/17		2117/18		2118/19		2119/20		2120/21		2121/22		2122/23		2123/24		2124/25		2125/26		2126/27		2127/28		2128/29		2129/30		2130/31		2131/32		2132/33		2133/34		2134/35		2135/36		2136/37		2137/38		2138/39		2139/40		2140/41		2141/42		2142/43		2143/44		2144/45		2145/46		2146/47		2147/48		2148/49		2149/50		2150/51		2151/52		2152/53		2153/54		2154/55		2155/56		2156/57		2157/58		2158/59		2159/60		2160/61		2161/62		2162/63		2163/64		2164/65		2165/66		2166/67		2167/68		2168/69		2169/70		2170/71		2171/72		2172/73		2173/74		2174/75		2175/76		2176/77		2177/78		2178/79		2179/80		2180/81		2181/82		2182/83		2183/84		2184/85		2185/86		2186/87		2187/88		2188/89		2189/90		2190/91		2191/92		2192/93		2193/94		2194/95		2195/96		2196/97		2197/98		2198/99		2199/00		2200/01		2201/02		2202/03		2203/04		2204/05		2205/06		2206/07		2207/08		2208/09		2209/10		2210/11		2211/12		2212/13		2213/14		2214/15		2215/16		2216/17		2217/18		2218/19		2219/20		2220/21		2221/22		2222/23		2223/24		2224/25		2225/26		2226/27		2227/28		2228/29		2229/30		2230/31		2231/32		2232/33		2233/34		2234/35		2235/36		2236/37		2237/38		2238/39		2239/40		2240/41		2241/42		2242/43		2243/44	
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High/Low Company				Price	Offer	Open	Vol	%	P/E
252	7/10	252	360	0	0	7.8	3.9	16.2	
253	7/10	253	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
254	7/10	254	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
255	7/10	255	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
256	7/10	256	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
257	7/10	257	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
258	7/10	258	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
259	7/10	259	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
260	7/10	260	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
261	7/10	261	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
262	7/10	262	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
263	7/10	263	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
264	7/10	264	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
265	7/10	265	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
266	7/10	266	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
267	7/10	267	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
268	7/10	268	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
269	7/10	269	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
270	7/10	270	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
271	7/10	271	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
272	7/10	272	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
273	7/10	273	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
274	7/10	274	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
275	7/10	275	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
276	7/10	276	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
277	7/10	277	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
278	7/10	278	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
279	7/10	279	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
280	7/10	280	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
281	7/10	281	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
282	7/10	282	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
283	7/10	283	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
284	7/10	284	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
285	7/10	285	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
286	7/10	286	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
287	7/10	287	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
288	7/10	288	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
289	7/10	289	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
290	7/10	290	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
291	7/10	291	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
292	7/10	292	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
293	7/10	293	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
294	7/10	294	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
295	7/10	295	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
296	7/10	296	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
297	7/10	297	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
298	7/10	298	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
299	7/10	299	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
300	7/10	300	360	0	0	13.3	6.1	21.9	
301	7								

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مَكْنَزٌ مِنَ الْأَصْلِ

It ain't hot in the high street

COMMENT

DAVID BREWERTON

A curious new convention has arisen to plague the lives of Britain's most miserable band of businessmen, the high street retailers. They have taken to giving the market regular updates on their trading position. This week, Boots set the ball rolling and Ramers and Storehouse have joined the fray. None of the news is good, but the most telling comment came from Easthope & Co, the jewellery business which began life as Next Jewellers, which went bust four days after Christmas.

Investors in the retail sector hardly need their companies to rub salt into their financial wounds. An investor in Ramers Group needs to know that sales increases were, on the one hand, "very satisfactory" but on the other "below best expectations" like he needs a Hogmanay hangover. Even publication of net and gross sales figures, with which Ramers has obliged its followers, tells investors little about profits. It does, however, indicate the close monitoring which the better organised retailers apply to their operations.

From Storehouse, a retailer

which, like Next, will now have to accept that the present management is responsible for current trading rather than the long-gone guru, comes the unenlightening news that "sales in December on a comparable basis were in line with last year". But unlike Ramers, which forecasts higher pre-tax profits, Storehouse thinks it unlikely that profits will exceed last year's. Put more bluntly, profits are likely to be down. The analysts, of course, came to this same conclusion without the advantage of a peek at the Christmas sales figures.

It can be argued that these trading statements have become a necessity to make certain that there are no false markets in particular shares, or that analysts who take the trouble to do their homework will not have an advantage over their more slow-footed colleagues.

More likely, however, is that, like the chairmen of the clearing banks who are firing a series of

"It ain't half hot mum" statements about bad debts into the public arena, the retailers believe that the more noise they make the more likely it is that Norman Lamont will be pushed to come to their aid with a cut in interest rates. It's worth a try, but publication of sales figures sets a precedent which the industry may regret.

Air links

There is growing pressure from an aviation industry strapped for cash and passengers for an early decision over the Heathrow routes. The British government has made it clear that routes into Heathrow

cannot be bought and sold. They are specific to the carrier allocated the slots. They are non-negotiable. But with several American airlines wishing to complete deals involving Heathrow routes, a chance is presented for the impasse to be broken by the US allowing foreign airlines to own up to 49 per cent of American carriers. In that event, British Airways would need to move rapidly to buy a regional carrier with a strong US domestic feeder network to protect its transatlantic Heathrow business.

On Wall Street, analysts say the most attractive candidate would be the Virginia-based USAir Group which joined with Piedmont almost a year ago in one of the largest mergers in

aviation history employing 50,000 staff and the services of more than 400 planes.

British Airways flies a route to Heathrow from one of USAir's main hubs in Pittsburgh, a link established between the companies more than six years ago and from which both have benefited.

But the USAir merger with Piedmont and soaring fuel costs have cut deeply into profits. In the nine months ending September 30, 1990, USAir lost \$233 million compared with a net income of \$38.5 million for the same period the previous year and a loss of \$63 million for the whole of 1989.

BA could pick up a 49 per cent stake in the airline for about \$400 million at a reasonable premium over today's share price. The same stake would have cost \$800 million before the impact of the jet fuel rise.

USAir has already cut jobs by 3,600, delayed taking some new

aircraft from Boeing until 1994-95, and trimmed passenger growth expectations by a year from 6 per cent to between 1 and 2 per cent.

But the potential link could be of enormous benefit to USAir. It has more departures a day than any other airline in the world after the Soviet nationalised airline Aeroflot. Last year it transported 61.2 million passengers to 175 cities in 36 countries, including the Caribbean, Puerto Rico, Canada, the US, and western Europe. It has five at Baltimore; Charlotte, North Carolina; Dayton, Ohio; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. In other words, a major airline.

Its feeds to the BA London flight through Pittsburgh are designed to compete for passenger, which would otherwise fly to London out of Chicago or New York. USAir's commuter service USAir Express serves 115 airports in America with 1,500 daily departures and carried 6 million passengers last year, 65 per cent connecting with other USAir flights. In total there are more than 400 flights a day capable of feeding BA flights, which makes a tempting case for a takeover.

OLD King Coal has not been such a merry old soul of late. After a century as Britain's principal source of energy, coal has been forced into retreat by increasing availability of natural gas and environmental concerns that focus on coal's "dirty" image.

Since 1985, the number of collieries operated by the British Coal Corporation has fallen from 170 to 69, and the workforce from 221,000 to 78,000. More closures are on the way.

Yet Lord Haslam, in his valedictory address as chairman of British Coal last month insisted coal will keep its position as Britain's main fuel for power generation well into the next century.

Anyone who has noted the spate of proposals for gas-fired power stations could be forgiven a degree of bafflement.

British Gas predicts that 15 such power stations are likely to be built by the end of the century, providing 7,000-8,000 megawatts of capacity. Of that, about 4,000 mw would replace existing coal plant, and the rest would meet increases in demand.

In addition, so many companies and public sector bodies are investigating construction of small gas-fired combined heat and power (CHP) plants that proponents claim they could account for 10 per cent of British power needs by the turn of the century.

Total generating capacity in mainland Britain is reckoned to be 65,900 mw. Of that, 58.6 per cent is provided by coal-fired plant, including 4,500 mw of coal or oil-fired capacity.

The capacity figures are not the whole picture. In practice, the supply companies are obliged by the government to take as much power as the nuclear stations can produce before the coal plants.

As demand rises, plants are brought on stream in "merit order" with the lowest-cost, most-efficient coal plants providing the backbone.

The merit order system is subject to distortion by a web of supply contracts between individual supply companies and generators, and the restricted capacity of the national grid to transfer power around the country.

The construction of large numbers of gas plants, pro-

King Coal will keep home fires burning yet



A future yet: Coal mining industry remains confident

ducing power at lower cost than the cheapest existing coal stations, would pose a grave threat to British Coal's core market. In the year to last March, British Coal sold 78.7 per cent of its total output of 95.2 million tonnes to mainland generators.

Although gas is a dearer fuel, combined cycle gas power stations are attractive to generating companies for four principal reasons. They are cheaper to build than existing coal plant, incur lower operating and maintenance bills, and achieve much higher efficiency in converting heat to electricity. In addition, their emissions of nitrous and sulphuric oxides are lower.

But the perceived disadvantages of coal are not necessarily insuperable. Faced with the challenge of gas, British Coal has stepped up research into coal-fired plants which can match gas on both costs and emissions. Much of

the work has been conducted by scientists at the Coal Research Establishment (CRE) in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. It has been aided by funding from other big coal-burning countries, including America and Germany.

CRE figures suggest that by the end of the century, new-generation coal plants could be almost competitive with gas, without any change in the price of either fuel. In practice, there are strong downward pressures on British coal prices. The outlook for gas prices, which are more subject to international trends, is less certain.

Existing coal plants in Britain rely on the proven technology of pulverised fuel to fire their boilers. In addition, because they burn coal at high temperatures, they need huge flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) plants to meet European Community emission

standards. Britain's first FGD plant is not yet complete.

According to CRE figures, the best thermal efficiency likely to be achieved by a medium size pulverised coal generating set, producing 200 mw net of its own operating requirements, is 37.1 per cent. The CRE says that a combined cycle gas plant of 240 mw would achieve 45 per cent, although plants with efficiencies in excess of 50 per cent are being designed.

CRE scientists have evaluated four main alternative coal-burning technologies. Like the combined cycle gas plants, the most promising ones use waste heat from the main turbine to help drive a subsidiary generating set.

Perhaps no less important, they solve the problems of emissions while continuing to burn British coal, which has a medium sulphur content.

The most promising plant, says CRE, uses a "topping cycle" on a pressurised fluidised bed combustion plant. Because it burns coal at lower temperatures than existing pulverised fuel plants, the sulphur is retained in the ash, while other pollutants can be readily removed from coal gas released during combustion.

With such technology, the CRE predicts, a coal-fired plant of 330 mw could achieve an efficiency of 44.8 per cent.

The improvements are reflected in projected operating costs. According to the CRE, such a plant would generate electricity at 2.9p a unit, against 3.5p for a conventional coal station and 2.4p for a natural gas plant.

A 3 mw demonstration plant to prove the system, funded by the International Energy Agency, is being built by British Coal at Grimethorpe, South Yorkshire. But even if successful, it is unlikely a commercial plant on the Grimethorpe model could be available for 10 years.

Coal may be out of fashion as a fuel for power generation, but the long term effects of exposing the British generating industry to market forces have yet to emerge. Domestic coal has many attractions in terms of security of supply. For that reason alone it is unlikely to be supplanted as one of Britain's key fuels.

ROSS TIEMAN

Insurers should lend helping hand

From Mr Peter Tarrant-Willis, Sir, I think your Comment on December 12 was a little unfair.

Chase Manhattan helped Legal & General, General Accident and Commercial Union to lend the "security" of the insurance companies to the collapsed Levitt Group. (Commercial Union made it just in time.)

Disappointed customers of the failed group will be cheered by the ability of these great, old-established companies to recompense them, taking on their duties as part-owners.

There should be no need to submit anyone to long-winded claim procedures to any other compensation fund, surely? Yours faithfully,

PETER TARRANT-WILLIS (Fimbra subscriber), Life & Pensions Insurance Broker and Independent Adviser, 108 Mill Lane, West Hampstead, NW6.

Putting the selling back into retailing

From Mr Michael J Hudsmith, Sir, With reference to your article "Retail engineers' gain" (December 17).

If "retail engineering" is to be the buzz phrase for retailers, it is to be hoped that its scope encompasses good old fashioned merchandising - buying and selling.

Certainly Epos and other worthwhile information technology, coupled with excellence in final logistics, is bringing some benefit.

Currently, in certain sectors, large price reductions will depress margins swiftly. Were the danger signs not seen earlier in the year or do they highlight an area that the industry has not studied in sufficient depth?

Is it not timely for the "retail engineers" to go right back to basics and re-examine the total process of buying/manufacturing flexibility? We have already seen what has happened on the final distribution cycle. The retailer surely seeks the synergy of excellence in the "whole". This may well mean that some "well founded principles" in buying/manufacturing fall under severe "what if" scrutiny.

Yours faithfully, MICHAEL J. HUDSMITH, White Gates, 12 Whitehall Road, Sittingbourne, Kent.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Misunderstandings about the function of Council of Lloyd's

From Mr Murray Lawrence, retiring chairman, Lloyd's of London

Sir, I have read the letters in your columns (December 18) from Dr John Maxwell and Dr Geoffrey Francis. Dr Maxwell referred to our correspondence relating to an insurance dispute within Lloyd's. This dispute was subject to a formal arbitration whose decision was given early in 1990.

It is not for the Council of Lloyd's to question such proceedings or their findings. Dr Francis would appear to misunderstand the safeguards in our solvency procedures, which are designed to give unquestioned and unrivalled security to our policyholders.

First, nothing is distributed to our members until the relevant annual account has run for three years.

Second, for each year of account, each and every Name is subject to an annual solvency test under arrangements approved both by the Council of Lloyd's and the Department of Trade and Industry. Losses revealed by these solvency tests must then be covered by each member, so the 1989 losses that were apparent at the end of 1989 were covered for solvency purposes at that time.

Third, the central fund cannot logically be compared to the total assets of an insurance company because the Lloyd's fund comes into play only after the exhaustion of the resources of an individual Member, which stand behind their underwriting at Lloyd's.

Carless companies are not 'ill-fated'

From Mr R.W. Hastings-Dasent

Sir, I refer to the article on Kelt Energy in Tempus, dated December 21, 1990.

I will not comment on the use of the words "ill-fated" to describe Carless in the context of the article, neither do I make any sort of comment on the article per se, but, as managing director of Repsol in the UK, which bought the Carless Refining and Marketing and Carless Petroleum elements from Kelt in August 1989, may I say how delighted Repsol are to have these two companies in their family now.

Both companies are fully bearing out the synergies and aspirations foreseen in that purchase in terms of Repsol's

long-term internationalisation project. These two Carless companies were, at the very least, and for different reasons, the most vibrant and organised of the UK Independents in the UK at the time. They are, most certainly not "ill-fated" today.

Yours faithfully, DICK HASTINGS-DASENT, Managing Director, Repsol (UK) Ltd, 5 Prince's Gate, London, SW7.

AEA is talking but not selling

From Dr R.S. Nelson, Sir, In two articles, on December 28 and 29, you referred to our talks with Société Générale de Surveillance (SGS) regarding business collaboration.

We did indeed engage in discussions, as we do with many other companies, but the selling of all or part of AEA Technology's business operations was never on the agenda for either of us.

Such talks often result in collaboration with industrial companies which benefit our international business.

Yours faithfully, R.S. NELSON, Managing Director, Industrial Business Group AEA Technology, Corporate Headquarters, Harwell Laboratory B329, Oxfordshire.

Draconian powers of DTI inspectors

From Mr Philip Ling, Sir, Asil Nadir is fortunate to be arrested at a time when the powers of the Serious Fraud Office have been clearly defined by the Criminal Justice Act of 1987.

Whilst he will have been compelled to answer questions put forward by the SFO (there being no right of silence) his answers cannot now be used by the police or the director of public prosecutions in their case against him.

This is entirely correct since it is a fundamental premise of British justice that a defendant in any criminal court should have a right of silence.

Seemingly, according to Sir John Nott's article in *The Times* of December 11, this principle has been circumvented in earlier cases where the draconian powers of the Department of Trade and Industry inspectors have procured incriminating evidence which the police and DPP then used in court.

As Sir John observes, this has resulted in white collar suspects being treated less fairly than terrorists, murderers or rapists.

Compared to the Guinness defendants Asil Nadir is indeed fortunate, and will, we must hope, have a fairer trial.

Yours faithfully, PHILIP LING, Haleworth House, The Hill, Egham, Surrey.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Uphill racer

RICHARD Williamson, the top-rated City skier who joined the UK equity desk at Williams de Broe last July, is about to lay his reputation on the line. As honorary secretary of the Stock Exchange Ski Club, he leads a party of budding aces to Switzerland this month for *Interbourne '91*, the annual ski-ing competition held between stock exchanges from around the world. Despite an impressive list of competitors from the Square Mile - including Mark Gachoud of Williams de Broe, who is tipped as the best skier in London - Williamson is hoping for some last-minute entrants to swell the ranks. "I would like some more stock-broking racing talent to get in touch," says Williamson, who adds that either he or Mark Abbott of Goldman Sachs, the team captain, will be happy to provide details. Teams from as far afield as Taiwan and Cincinnati are due in Grindelwald from January 19-26 for the event, which has been running for 23 years. Last year, the London stock exchange was placed fifth, its best result in eight years, and

Williamson hopes for a similar performance at this month's competition.

CORRECTION in the Daily Courier of Winfield, Kansas: "Aggie Callison, a Winfield High School junior, will sing the part of the youth in Mendelssohn's *Elisabeth*. She will replace her cousin, Troy Clark, an eighth grader, who has suddenly become a tenor."

Chivalry rewarded FIRMS of accountants have spent years trying to convince the public they are not grey and boring. So it is refreshing that one of their ranks has been given the recognition they deserve - a vote of thanks from the Order of St John. The gesture, the first given by the order in London for four years, goes to Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte for "out-standing service". Much of the credit is due to Michael Roberts, a partner, who has given up his suite on the top floor of the firm's Queen Victoria Street offices several times for use as a control centre by the St John Ambulance service during the Lord Mayor's show. "They used to put a transmitter on the roof during the procession," says Mr Roberts, who has helped the order

with its audit in the past. A scroll of thanks has been presented to John Bullock, joint senior partner.

Inside jobs

WHITE collar criminals defrauded India's state-owned banks of 50.22 billion rupees (£1.4 billion) last year, according to Digvijay Singh, the deputy finance minister. Singh told the parliament's upper house yesterday that the losses were linked to 1,584 incidents of bank fraud last year. But he failed to mention how much of that amount had been recovered by the financial institutions. In a move to curb such losses, the Reserve Bank of India, the country's central bank, has issued a set of guidelines, urging the banks to strengthen any control mechanisms already in place. Perhaps fortunately, most financial institutions in India are insured against fraud as well as robbery. Another one for Lloyd's?

AMERICAN researchers have spent the last six months trying to find out which most unusual laws and regulations are still in force. They discovered that it is still illegal to be seen drinking soup in public in New Jersey, mount a bus within

four hours of eating garlic in Gary, Indiana and to serve wine in a teacup in Topeka, Kansas.

Pyramid selling

THOSE opposed to the idea of privatisation should spare a thought for the humble citizens of Egypt, where just about everything - hotels and shops included - is owned by the state. Realising that it may be wise to pass these and larger enterprises into private hands, and the threat of war in the Gulf notwithstanding, the Egyptian government has turned to Britain for help. A team from British Invisibles - the former British Invisible Export Council - flies to Egypt today to set the ball rolling. The team is led by Andrew Buxton, vice chairman and managing director of Barclays, who sits on the board of British Invisibles and is a frequent visitor to the Middle East. "They are interested in the actual mechanics of how to go about privatisation," says Buxton, who is joined, among others, by Peter Benson of Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte. After a weekend of seminars, the team is due back on Monday.

JON ASHWORTH

Britain must compete with US to keep managed futures industry

From Mr John Rayden

Sir, Recently, in a consultative paper on futures and options unit trusts, the Securities and Investments Board said that in drawing up proposals for how these products might be regulated, it had tried to strike the right balance between the need to ensure that investors in these products are properly protected, and the need to ensure that the industry can develop genuinely new products offering a wider range of investment strategies for investors.

As a participant in the managed currency and futures industry with about £120 million under management we find it unfortunate that the SIB has not also considered that the industry in the UK will never develop these new products if other regulatory environments allow a more flexible yet still credible regulation. All fund managers

will seek to establish their collective investment schemes in these other countries.

At present there are no other countries immediately seeking to regulate futures funds which might also be allowed to be promoted in the UK. However the growth of the global futures industry in terms of new exchanges in different countries and new contracts traded together with a thawing of fund managers' dislikes towards derivative markets, will probably give rise to more countries developing a structure for regulating futures collective investment schemes in the future.

The effort to lower barriers to free trade was hampered by the recent failure of the GATT talks. However it would appear that from a global perspective the move to reducing barriers to free trade in financial products is now picking up momentum. A

large impetus is coming from the EEC's banking directives and the move to 1992.

The leading country in the field of managed futures funds is the USA. The CFTC has adopted the principle of requiring the thorough and complete disclosure of all information which might possibly be of relevance to any investor. The fund managers are then able to trade the markets as they deem fit. This system of regulation allows a much greater degree of flexibility than the regulations proposed by the SIB.

The danger as we see it is that if other countries decide to follow the US standard of making all the information needed available to the investor followed by a clear "caveat emptor" policy then the greater scope of investment powers enjoyed by the US industry and which might be enjoyed by other countries

will inevitably lead to greater levels of profitability and so probably to greater levels of sales from these other countries.

If SIB and the DTI and ultimately Parliament wish London to retain its position as the centre of European finance then they will have to recognise the existence of other competing regulatory environments and their probable impact on business.

It is this point which the SIB have failed to take into consideration and which we would urge them to take up in the future. If SIB does not take these points into consideration then SIB may not have a managed futures industry to regulate. Yours faithfully, JOHN ROYDEN, Director, ECU FUTURES PLC, 2 Edinburgh Gate, Knightsbridge, SW1

Buyers must wait eight years to get behind the wheel of a Morgan, the nippy, hand-built sports car, Daniel Ward writes

In the home of Morgan change happens slowly and is most often sneered at. The latest Morgan, the 3.9 litre Plus 8 (priced at £22,362), looks no different. The new model is either the best-looking



some pride in making the 3.9 Plus 8 clean enough to satisfy the tough 1983 Californian exhaust emission test while also beating, in acceleration, the world's fastest sports car, as judged in a recent test in a German magazine.

Previously, fast motoring with an unyielding suspension on any road that did not have the smoothness of a bowling green forced the driver into intense concentration. Controlling a fast

The leopard has not changed its spots but there have been improvements. Bounce on the front bumper and the suspension will not yield a millimeter, yet

Who buys a Morgan? Charles Morgan, the grandson of the founder, says: "We have the impoverished owner who has a four-seater and drives it everywhere; he services it himself and likes its simplicity. Then we have the bloke who has three other cars. There is no typical owner."

"Stay small and stay safe" has been the company's philosophy since the Sixties. Charles Morgan now accepts that the company must produce more cars. "The last impression we want to give is that we do this as a hobby," he says. "We can be

An estate car justifies its purchase for any family by the extreme volume of belongings, from dogs to chests of drawers, that can be swallowed without protest and still



As a rule of thumb, top-of-the-range models are rarely good value, and the the **Escort Ghia Estate at £13,010**

EDITED BY KEVIN EASON

■ The prices of Protons, the Malaysian cars winning success in Britain, have risen by 3 per cent on average. The base model 1.3GL

headquarters in Essex. The tests used to be among the last in the development of a new vehicle and sometimes revealed problems. The new computer can test components at concept stage.

SABE

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Chinese prodigy diving for gold

هكذا من الأصل

Great to be down-under breakfasting on hope

Sydney

IF ONE man's idea of heaven is "eating pâté de foie gras to the sound of trumpets", another's could well be arriving in Sydney to watch England play Australia at cricket. Even when, as now, one side seems decidedly stronger than the other, the prospect has a very special appeal.

By perseverance and not without much suffering, Allan Border and Bobby Simpson have built Australia's best team since the middle seventies. For England to get back on to level terms with them now would be a remarkable achievement, but there are worse grounds on which to set about it. Twice in the last six years, Australia have turned the tables there on West Indian sides much better than themselves.

Almost inevitably, one hears of depression within the England camp, though it is not, I think, entirely of their own making. They have obviously been



dradfully unlucky with injuries, which I shall come back to later, and there is understandable resentment over the programme to which the Test and County Cricket Board committed them, a legacy of the quite indiscriminate raid which Mr Packer led on the traditional game.

It is also, I am afraid, a very different proposition winning Test matches in Australia in 1991 than it was in 1936-37, the only Ashes tour on which one side, after losing the first two Tests, has won the last three. In those days there had to be a winner, the matches being time-les. The fourth Test of that 1936-37 series had lasted for the equivalent of 520 six-ball overs when a result was achieved.

Today's are scheduled to last for 450 overs, and even that is not a compulsory figure.

I began by thinking that the ten successive one-day matches which England were obliged to play immediately after the first Test might be a useful way of giving most of them more cricket than they would otherwise have had, and so sorting out some of their problems. Instead, they made matters worse. Watching the television from Brisbane, as England, chasing Australia's 283 for five from 50 overs, stumbled from 104 for one to 131 for five, was to see what havoc the one-day game can do, technically and temperamentally, to players already short of conviction.

A good enough side will usually prevail, however unsuitable its itinerary may seem. I recall leaving Brisbane after England had been annihilated in the first Test of the 1954-55 tour and wondering how they could

possible be expected to repair the damage of that when they had only two picnic games (1,000 miles apart) and one four-day match against Victoria before the second Test began. That they managed it was because of their ability as cricketers.

Nor had they been exposed by then to the perils and temptations of limited-overs cricket. That particular MCC side, captained by Hutton, was in fact full of potentially brilliant one-day players — but they would have been thrown at times into confusion. Just as a week of battling with a gale can dismantle a golfer's game, so the helter-skelter of these one-day jamborees can disrupt a cricketer's.

But Graham Gooch's side were always going to find Australia difficult to bowl out twice, especially when a party was chosen of such limited mobility in the field. Amid the relief, not to say euphoria, of actually

beating New Zealand and India last summer, the regularity with which, even then, large scores were being made against England, culminating in India's 606 for nine declared at the Oval in August, tended to be glossed over. When England left for Australia, they had conceded totals of over 400 in 12 of their previous 16 Test matches.

Even so, they came to Australia with grounds for optimism. If the re-introduction of David Gower challenged the strictly regimented order established by Gooch and Micky Stewart, his lightness of touch and record against the old enemy had obvious appeal. Smith, Lamb, Atherton and Gooch himself would surely get used to it as they showed in the Caribbean last winter, there was no shortage of physical courage among the batsmen. What has happened so far has been as disappointing as anything since 1958-59, when a MCC side of all the talents

entirely failed to live up to expectations.

Even before the start of the present tour, the operation has seemed to be unhelpfully tant. One has heard awfully little to suggest that the players have been enjoying themselves, and when one did, during the first Test match, the circumstances, involving, of all people, Tony Greig and Kerry Packer, bordered on the macabre. Having come into this business when players and press sailed together to Australia, and remembering the cheerfulness of it all, I do view rather warily the way today's teams are made to train as though for the Olympics rather than the Ashes.

As orders are barked across the barracks square, and yet more circuits lapped and press-ups pressed, I find myself wondering whether that really is the way to get the best out of a cricketer's game. It seems to me that it very

well may not be: that it may be counter-productive because of the stresses and tensions it creates. It certainly seems to make the players no less prone to injury.

And while I am harking back a little to the days before "bleep tests" were invented, if I had ever seen Alec Bedser and Cyril Washbrook sticking out their chests and rubbing them against each other's when England took a wicket on the Sydney Cricket Ground like a pair of doves courting, as I did with two of the present side the other day, I would have supposed I was having a nightmare. No wonder we are no good at cricket, I thought to myself. For all that, though, it is lovely to be here, still breakfasting on hope: and what better, as an alternative to pâté de foie gras and trumpets than a dozen of Sydney's delicious oysters attended by a ten-year-old Semillon from the nearby Hunter River Valley.

John Snow keeps a low profile at the ground where he made Australians' blood boil

ICC set to discuss S African situation

By SIMON WILDE

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is to discuss the recent developments in the game in South Africa at its special meeting in Melbourne next week. Colin Cowdrey, the chairman of the ICC, said before departing for Australia yesterday that although the matter is not on the meeting's agenda it is certain to be debated.

Shortly before Christmas, the sport's controlling bodies in the Republic, the South African Cricket Union (SACU) and the South African Cricket Board (SACB), announced after a meeting in Port Elizabeth that they intend to merge. The significance of this was emphasised by one of the nine statements of intent issued with the Port Elizabeth declaration: that the proposed new non-racial governing body should "have respect for and obtain recognition from, and the membership of, the ICC".

There are increasing signs that the ICC is prepared to encourage South Africa. David Richards, the chief executive of the Australian Cricket Board, had made it clear that if Cowdrey did not ensure the South African issue was discussed, he would, Richards, however, has cautioned against over-optimism about the proximity of South Africa's international return. The merger between the SACU and the SACB may not be complete until the end of the year, at the earliest.

Krish Mackerdihji, the SACB president, said about the plans to merge: "We will tell the ICC that while the developments are going on and the political situation is so fluid, if you are sending up programmes for tours for the next ten years, put in South Africa with a question mark."

Another of the statements of intent makes it clear that the SACU is to respect the ICC's wishes by not signing any more overseas professionals to play or coach in South Africa, although the contracts of the dozen or so foreigners active in the Republic will be honoured. However, the declaration states: "It will be the responsibility of the newly formed national body, after, to determine the desirability of overseas professional cricketers playing in South Africa."

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, SYDNEY

JOHN Snow strolls anonymously through the streets of Sydney, attracting nothing so much as a sideways glance of recognition. Twenty years ago, things were different. Then, Snow was the man who made Australian blood boil in a way no English fast bowler had done since Harold Larwood.

The analogy continues. Nowadays, Larwood pursues the life of a recluse in the Sydney suburb he inconspicuously chose as his home post-bodyline. Snow is no hermit but his profile is kept consciously low, in Sydney as in Sussex.

It will stay that way today, when the third Test begins on the ground where his exploits dominated during the 1970-71 tour, the last time England won back the Ashes in Australia. In one Sydney Test, he took a match-winning seven for 40; in the other, he hit an Australian tailender on the head, provoking an umpiring confrontation, serious crowd reaction and an England walk-off. He also ended up in hospital. The game was never dull when this son of a Worcestershire vicar was around.

Looking at him now, lean, fit and apparently ready to bowl his usual 20 overs with that marvellously fluid action, it hardly seems possible that he will be 50 this year. It also hardly seemed fair to remind him, as he reminisces over the Tests for which he will always be remembered.

"I suppose I was seen as a bit of a villain here," he says with the twinkling smile of one fully aware he was occasionally seen as a villain in the committee rooms of Lord's, too. "But I learned that in Australia, they may hate you, but they will still respect you if you do the business on the field. To be barracked here is a mark of respect."

Snow tells a story of his



Test flashpoint: Snow in conflict with Rowan, the umpire, after Jenner had ducked into the England fast bowler's delivery in Sydney in 1971

homeward flight, when invaded out of the tour before the New Zealand leg. "The plane stopped in Darwin and I decided to have a final Australian beer. A fellow at the bar looked at me sharply and said: 'You're John Snow. I've been swearing at you all summer.' Then he insisted on buying me drinks and slapping my back.

It summed up the attitude here. "This had always seemed to me the ultimate place to play cricket. To tour Australia with England had been my great ambition since childhood. Perhaps, in 1970, the Tests created more intensity than they do now. The occasion was bigger because there was no one-day cricket to

deflect attention. But that does not mean I necessarily feel things were better then. "I used to get fed up with county cricket, because I wanted to play in front of a crowd, not two men and a dog. For that reason, I would have relished the one-dayers played now. After all, they only take the game back to its roots, and in the course of

time I think they may help Test cricket rather than destroy it."

Snow is a quiet, reflective man these days. He has given up the poetry writing which diverted him through his playing career, but he remains far removed from the rebellious image in which he was painted.

His travel business occupies him fully, but he retains real skills in the communication of coaching, which England could, and should, have utilised in recent years.

He is watching this tour lurch from drama to chaos with more sorrow than anger and, as he reflects on his own series, two decades ago, he points out that roles were fully reversed.

"We were the more experienced side, we took an early lead and then hung onto it without serious injury problems. They hit us in the last Test. Geoff Boycott had his arm in a sling and I joined him before the end of the game."

By then, Snow had been subjected to a torrent of bottles and cans, and the arm-wrestling of a drunk, after Terry Jenner had ducked into a short ball. Ray Illingworth, in Snow's view the best England captain since Hutton, controversially led his team off the field.

Two days later, with Australia pursuing a very accessible target to win the game and keep the Ashes, Snow took the first wicket and then, in trying to take a boundary catch, dislocated his right little finger so badly that, despite immediate surgery, it remains disfigured now.

He was showing me the damage yesterday when a waiter came across. "I think," the waiter said, "England should be looking to call up some of its golden oldies tomorrow, don't you?" Snow simply smiled. In the city where he was reviled as a pommie headhunter and resented as a truly great fast bowler, at least someone still knew him.

St Albans aiming higher in second European contest

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

ST ALBANS enter the second European indoor club championship at Limburg, Germany, today with high hopes as they face the Dutch champions, Hattumse, in the first match of the three-day tournament.

In the inaugural event last year at Amiens, where there were 16 teams, St Albans finished a disappointing seventh. After winning their first two matches, they drew 8-8 with Madrid and just failed to qualify for the semi-finals as only one team went through from each pool. In the play-offs they lost 14-11 to Ponomorova, of Poland, their opponents tomorrow in one of the key matches of pool B.

Murray International Metals won the bronze medal last year for Scotland, but this time the Scots are represented by Ruthvenston, also in the same pool as St Albans and scheduled to meet them in the last match today.

There is plenty of skill and experience in the St Albans team with Hurst in goal, Halliday,

Jennings and Wisner providing a sound base on which to build their attacks. Anderson, Day, Ferns and Rowley are all capable of turning the fortunes of a match with their zeal for work.

But the winners last year, Rot-Weiss, of Cologne, will be the side to beat, although they face strong opposition from the other German side, Limburger, Amiens, from France, and SP Valdeluz, from Spain, make up the teams in pool A. The winners and runners up of each pool qualify for the semi-finals. England begin their challenge in the international club tournament today at Arminia, Austria, with a match against Stadtsauwahl, of Vienna, and will meet the Spanish national side later in the day. England, however, are without McGuire, Barker and Lee who are playing for British Universities in the Los Reyes outdoor tournament at Barcelona.

ST ALBANS SQUAD: J Hurst, C Adams, R Hurst, G Walker, M Anderson, P Spelling, M Day, A Halliday (captain), S Port, K Rowley, J Jennings, A Ferns.

Double focus for Ipswich line-up

By ALIX RAMSAY

IPSWICH will go to Cambridge for the East indoor club championships on Sunday with two aims: to qualify for the national finals in February and to gain as much match practice as possible for the European indoor championships in France, also to be held next month.

Ipswich qualified for the European competition as the defending national indoor champions last year, although their route to the title was far from easy. They were beaten by Chelmsford in the regional competition before getting their own back over their neighbours in the national semi-finals. From there on, there was no stopping them.

The indoor game started life as a training exercise, players looking to improve their skills on the artificial surface. Now, with the most outdoor matches played on plastic and with a packed competition schedule, the indoor game has outlived its usefulness. This has

been reflected in the club championships with three of the East counties — Norfolk, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire — sending no representatives.

Ipswich will find their main opposition coming from Welwyn Garden City and Chelmsford. However, both these clubs are in the second section for group matches, which means Ipswich would not have to face them until the semi-finals, should all go according to form.

Having trained long and hard for Europe, Ipswich are confident of success this weekend and, in theory, ought to win comfortably. But playing the six-a-side game with a high number of substitutions and goals aplenty, matches can take on something of a cup-tie atmosphere. Ipswich will be looking to their internationals, Sandy Slater, Sarah Barnfield, Vickie Davidson, Tracy Fry and Helen Bray, to take them through to the national finals at Crystal Palace.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Runs to resort	Weather (°F/°C)	Last snow
AUSTRIA					
Isle	5 60	fair	crust	warm	fine 1 2/1
Slopes showing signs of wear					
Kitzbühel	15 70	heavy	worn	sun	5 2/1
Adequate on all higher slopes					
Mayrhofen	50 75	slushy	heavy	cloud	fine 3 2/1
Plates below 2,200m very worn					
Obergurgl	55 140	good powder	fair	fine	1 2/1
Excellent skiing conditions on upper runs					
Alpe d'Huez	70 210	fair	varied	fair	fine 2 2/1
Very good spring conditions					
Chamonix	35 195	good	crust	cloud	fine 4 2/1
Good piste skiing on final facing slopes					
Fair					
Some icy and rocky patches on lower runs					
Isola	80 120	good	heavy	cloud	fine 6 10/12
Soft snow on piste, but off piste very heavy					
La Plagne	100 130	good	varied	good	cloud 2 2/1
All pistes in excellent condition. Some icy patches					
Les Arcs	50 211	good	fair	poor	sun 5 2/1
Warm temperatures reducing lower slopes to slush					
Tignes	100 210	good	varied	icy	fine 1 2/1
Excellent skiing in fine conditions					
Val d'Isère	80 120	good	heavy	good	fine 0 2/1
Poor off piste and increasing avalanche danger					
Val Thorens	150 200	good	varied	fair	fine -5 2/1
Excellent skiing conditions on a well formed base					
ITALY					
Corvinia	70 230	good	heavy	good	fine 4 2/1
Heavy conditions					
SWITZERLAND					
Arosa	50 70	good	heavy	good	fine 2 2/1
Pistes in good condition					
Crans Montana	50 180	good	varied	worn	fine 4 2/1
Warm weather has caused problems on lower slopes					
Davos	25 90	good	varied	fair	fine 2 2/1
Excellent skiing despite warm weather					
Saas Fee	15 210	good	varied	good	fine 3 2/1
Excellent skiing on all pistes. Some queues					
Verbier	15 210	good	varied	poor	fine 8 2/1
South facing slopes becoming slushy					
Zermatt	80 130	good	powder	good	fine 3 2/1
Sliding on upper slopes is excellent					

In the above reports, supplies by representatives of the Ski Club of Great Britain, L refers to lower slopes and U to upper, and art to artificial.

Shelford is invited to return

NORTHAMPTON have invited Wayne Shelford, the New Zealand, to return to the club next season for a further year (Peter Hills writes).

The club, delighted with Shelford's influence, says it has been encouraged by the former All Blacks' initial response. Barrie Corless, the coaching organiser, said: "We are quite hopeful Wayne will return because he was pretty positive about the offer when we approached him. His family has settled in well and he has worked for both parties. Frankly, we would like his services for as long as possible."

The decisive factor will be whether Shelford receives any encouragement from Alex Wylie, the All Blacks coach, when he asks whether there is any future for him in the New Zealand squad for the World Cup. If Wylie is positive, Shelford will go home before the end of this season to play the representative season in New Zealand. If not, Northampton can expect him to remain and then probably return early next season for another year.

The former All Blacks captain is in demand world-wide. Transvaal have made repeated calls to Northampton.

Northampton would like an answer to their offer soon. If Shelford cannot come, the club plans to approach another New Zealander to replace the All Black for next season. "Their attitude to both training and matches is quite different to ours. Wayne's excellent influence has rubbed off on everyone," Corless said.

Why Wales should rely on mild-mannered Mr Jones

GERALD DAVIES

THE time is upon us when we should come out of the woodshed and not be shy in declaring our preference. This does not, as in other years, concern stand-off halves. There seem too many of them to talk about, and all too much of a muckiness for a coherent debate, which is in itself a barometer of the uncertain condition of Welsh rugby.

No. This is about the other half of Welsh rugby's immortal pairing. For a change, the scrum half has emerged to form the centrepiece of the argument. Although with as many questions raised over the team as there are positions to fill, the importance of the debate about the scrum half might be thought as irrelevant as choosing a captain of a vessel which is about to set sail with an almighty leak in its prow.

That the debate should be taken at all seriously is even more surprising. But there it is. Hereabouts, the topic will have animated many a flagging yuletide reunion: Robert Jones, of Swansea, or Chris Bridges, of Neath.

Welsh rugby is so short of class that the curious possibility exists — a very strong probability, even — that Robert Jones, one of only two players who possesses the quality — the other being Mark Ring — is likely to be omitted from the Welsh team to be announced next week. This ought to provoke at least a tiny voice of resistance.

For the second time in his career, Jones, capped 32 times for Wales and a player recognised to be of world-class stature, is in the dock having to plead his case to play against

England in a fortnight's time. Jones should not be chosen again to sit merely on the bench and play understudy to Bridges, as he did in Wales's last match against the Barbarians. This is not to make small of Bridges' talent, for he is, indeed, a very fine player. But he has still to make a clear-cut case that he is overwhelmingly the better man. Unless a player has done this, he has yet to drop his standards to a club level he ought not to displace the player in the national colours.

Bridges has had the luxury of the Neath forwards in front of him. When they have failed to flex their considerable muscles and impose their will, as happened against Newport, and Maesteg recently, Bridges looked less comfortably off.

Even though Jones has had to play behind an inferior pack of forwards for most of the time, he has yet to drop his standards to a club level he ought not to displace the player in the national colours. Jones has, in fact, been consistently good. By general consent, he was the sole redeeming feature in Wales's whitewash last season.

If the team is not winning, it is hardly his fault. To put someone else in that position in the hope that it will suddenly make things better is to be a little bit silly. Jones is the stuff of fancy.

Jones was dropped in New Zealand in 1988 but it made not an iota of difference, so long as the forward platform was ineffective, when a more forceful player was installed at scrum half.

The last time Wales managed to impose themselves on any team — against England two years ago — Jones, aided by the brilliance of Norster in the lineout, tested the opposition in a way that exposed their psychological fragility, and won. Apart from playing with the British Isles and occasionally with his club, the schizophrantic Swansea, he has known little of that kind of luxury with a national team.

Jones may not thrust around the scrum as effectively as Bridges. Yet to emphasise a weakness is to fail to do justice to Jones's strengths. He is quick of eye, swift of response. He leads and plays by example. In a list of scrum halves' needs, the prime importance. Ask him to pass a ball and he will do so, whichever way you choose, under the severest pressure. He has balance, he has poise. And, above all, he has class.

There is, as old-fashioned word, chivalry, in his play and good manners in his form. He smiles, too. Which, to far too many, are signs of weakness rather than — which there rightly are — signs of strength. Bridges' time will come but, for now, let him be the apprentice. At this stage in his career, you imagine, he could be kept quiet by a vigilant back row. He has much still to learn. Jones, on the other hand, will not lie down.

For Jones, the Australian captain, respects him, McGeechan, the Scotland coach, admires him. Bridges has, as yet, no such reputation to defend. Jones has. And knows it. And for any sportsman who cares, that represents a driving force greater than hunger.

Roses match may lead to honours

SCHOOLS RUGBY by MICHAEL STEVENSON

THE excellence of the eight-team Group Roses match at Skipton last Monday was such a superb advertisement for schools rugby that it will be surprising if a number of the players on show that day do not go forward to further representative honours.

Yorkshire managed to preserve their unbeaten record in the face of a spirited second half from Lancashire, who earlier had beaten Northumberland and Cumbria but had been trounced by Durham, with whom Yorkshire had drawn.

Last season, Cheshire were comfortably the strongest northern county and, having also drawn with Durham this winter, they are still unbeaten. Sadly, they will not be meeting Yorkshire who, unlike Lancashire and Cheshire, confine their fixtures to school holidays.

Radley finished the term with the tripartite record of played 11: won 11, scoring 283 points to 27 conceded. Only three tries were scored against them. At the end of term, a combined Radley and Wellington side beat Falcon College, from Zimbabwe, 29-7.

The divisional finals of the Daily Mail Under-18 Cup will be between South West: Bishop Wordsworth's and RGS High Wycombe; Midlands: Ellesmere and King Edward's, Stratford; North: RGS Newcastle and St Edward's, Liverpool; and London: St Olave's and the winners of Reigate GS and London Oratory. All finals will be played by February 6.

The visitors had not lost for 25 matches.

Colston's have enjoyed another wonderful season, although they lost their first game to St Brendan's. Since then they have won all 12 matches, scoring 323 points, including 62 tries, to 33 conceded. Perhaps their most remarkable achievement was to go the whole term without conceding a try. Their leading points scorer was the flanker, Leigh Collins, with 91.

It is good to hear that rugby is flourishing in the state sector at Burford School. They run five teams and their 1st XV reached the final of the Oxford County Cup, losing 6-0 to Lord William's School, Thame.

The divisional finals of the Daily Mail Under-18 Cup will be between South West: Bishop Wordsworth's and RGS High Wycombe; Midlands: Ellesmere and King Edward's, Stratford; North: RGS Newcastle and St Edward's, Liverpool; and London: St Olave's and the winners of Reigate GS and London Oratory. All finals will be played by February 6.

Radu Demian, the Romanian Rugby Federation secretary, said: "As soon as we get an official invitation we will inform the International Rugby Football Board to ask for their approval."

"We are ready to accept an invitation to South Africa but our tour will materialise only if all responsible bodies... agree."

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THE TIMES

SPORT

League will pack the power of the leading two clubs

By STUART JONES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

MANY Liverpool and Arsenal players are about to receive an appealing compensation for being knocked out of the Rumbelows Cup. While seven other first division clubs are competing in the quarter-final ties on January 16, they are sure to be representing the Football League against the Italian League in Naples.

The squad to be announced today promises to be powerful in spite of the limited choice. The only notable omissions will be Bryan Robson and Gary Lineker, the past and present captains of England, and Paul Gascoigne and David Platt, both of whom made an impact in Italy during the World Cup.

Gascoigne will be under suspension and the others will be on domestic duty with Tottenham Hotspur, Manchester United and Aston Villa. Gary Mabbitt, David Howells, Gary Pallister, Paul Ince, Neil Webb, Danny Wallace, Nigel Spink and Gordon Cowans, all of whom were selected in England's B squad last month, are also ruled out of consideration.

So are David Batty, John Lukic and Mel Sterland, of Leeds United, and Matthew Le Tissier, of Southampton. The other clubs to have reached the last eight of the cup, Chelsea and Coventry City, have no leading contenders other than Andy Townsend, who might have

been chosen in midfield. The process of elimination does not end there. Tony Daley, of Villa, and Paul Parker, of Queen's Park Rangers, are also unavailable because of injury, for example, but there is enough remaining quality for Lawrie McMenemy to be able to call up a formidable array of experienced internationals.

Graham Taylor, England's manager, who will be otherwise engaged in the United States during the fixture, and his assistant can look beyond the national barriers. The most obvious candidates among the foreign contingent are Glenn Hysen, the captain of Sweden, and Anders Limpar, his fellow countryman.

Both of them have the added advantage of being familiar with the style of the Italians. Hysen, Liverpool's composed central defender, was bought from Fiorentina and Limpar, the inspirational spark behind Arsenal's challenge for the title, was acquired from Atlanta. He could be balanced on the other flank by John Barnes.

Liverpool's winger has long expressed a desire to move to the Continent. His international reputation, which has been built almost exclusively on his club performances, declined during the World Cup and he would relish another public opportunity to convince the Italians at least

that his talent has not yet diminished.

In spite of the absence of Lineker, the front line could be led by prolific scorers, Ian Rush and Dean Saunders, fellow Welshmen, could partner each other and Ian Wright, Crystal Palace's explosive forward, is another prominent contender. Between them they have claimed 38 goals so far this season.

Midfield is potentially the weakest area. Steve McMahon, although his recent contribution for Liverpool has been less than convincing, will probably be included with Michael Thomas and Paul Davis, the reliable pair from Arsenal. By contrast, Taylor and McMenemy are almost spoiled for choice at the back.

As well as Hysen, they can summon several members of England's defensive unit in the World Cup. Mark Wright, who could be employed in his usual international role of sweeper, Des Walker and Stuart Pearce are available. So is Lee Dixon, who has appeared in all three of Taylor's line-ups.

David Seaman, who collected his one full England cap two years ago, is likely to be invited with Neville Southall, arguably the best goalkeeper in the League. They are expected to complete a squad, which would conveniently link perhaps 10 players from the two strongest sides in the country.

Not all ship-shape and presidential fashion at Rye

MARC ASPLAND



Adrift in stormy waters: Fiona Edmond is beginning to flag as she strives to beat off her opponent as well as the effects of the flu

American beats rival and jet-lag

By JOHN HENNESSY

GUY Woollet, American winner of the President's Putter for Oxford in two of the last three years, plundered another handsome victory in the second round at Rye yesterday. Having won 6 and 4 on Wednesday, he overpowered the luckless Graham McCallum, a *rara avis* in that he did not win a Blue, 8 and 7.

In these two matches, moreover, Woollet would have been at his most vulnerable since he arrived from the United States only on Wednesday morning. The

longer he survives, therefore, the harder he will surely be to dislodge. Yet Michael Baigent, from the other place, may be expected to offer a more worthwhile challenge this morning.

Fiona Edmond, a heroine for Cambridge last year under her maiden name of Macdonald, was given short shrift by Jamie Warman, a former Oxford captain. It was unfortunate for Edmond, already suffering from the after-effects of flu, that they started at the 10th tee, since her lack of length against such an

accomplished opponent was bound to be cruelly exposed on the more demanding back nine.

Warman, allowing halves at only two holes going out, turned seven up and, predictably, went eight up with eight to play at the 1st (their 10th), the only par five of the course. Edmond, who has to play off the same tees in the Putter, won the next three holes with a final little flourish, but was dispatched at the 5th (their 14th). Needing two for the match from five feet, Warman, in his own words,

"twitched it in when I was aiming to take two." Even so, gentleman that he is, he called it 5 and 4.

Andrew Edmond, newly married to Fiona, narrowly survived after being four up against Martin Yates and so is one match away from what boxers might call a double grudge bout. Edmond would want to avenge his wife's defeat and Warman his own fall at the hands of the husband in last year's tournament.

Yates, three down with five to play, holed excellent puts

to win the 5th (their 14th) and 7th and then putted up to three feet from off the green for a birdie three at the 9th. He was unlucky to find a fairway divot at the second extra hole and could not get up.

A wild, wet afternoon had turned stygian before play ended and one pair have to go down the 19th this morning. Godfrey Penfold chanced his arm with a 2½-foot putt at the 18th, but without the benefit of floodlights it was touch and go. It went.

Results, page 29

Fraser ruled out of Test

From ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, SYDNEY

ANGUS Fraser was last night ruled out of England's team for the third Test, with the team management insistently denying the conclusion that they had taken an unwarranted risk by playing him in the limited-overs match on Tuesday.

Fraser was surprisingly included for the day-night game against Australia despite the pain of an inflamed hip. Micky Stewart, the team manager, claims that Fraser would not have played had there been any fear of causing further damage, but concedes that the player was in more distress at the end of the game than at the start.

The outcome is that England are without their best bowler for a match they must win to retain an interest in the

Ashes, and the suspicion of a foolish gamble having backfired will be difficult to dismiss.

When Fraser took no part in yesterday's practice, Stewart said: "It would be a stab in the back to pick him now." But he added: "Playing in the one-day made no difference at all. Laurie Brown, our physiotherapist, was confident it would not worsen the condition. There was no gamble involved."

By the time the selectors convened, however, it was plain that to include Fraser would be one punt too many in a side already obliged to discard the conventions of a balanced attack to protect a highly suspect batting order.

A final decision on the twelfth man was not to be

taken until the pitch had been reinspected before the toss but Peter Lush, the tour manager, intimated that the major policy choice had already been made with the sensible retention of Russell as wicketkeeper.

This either meant Russell batting at No. 6, at least one place too high, or, much more likely, England going in with Malcolm and Small as the only two seam bowlers. Gooch, the captain, would be expected to provide some back-up, with most of the work being done by the two spin bowlers, Tufnell and Hemmings.

Some heartening news came with Tufnell's recovery from a stomach disorder but, as expected, Lamb was discounted, making this the fifth consecutive overseas Test in which England have been unable to include Gooch and Lamb together.

AUSTRALIA (from A R Border (captain), M A Taylor, G R Marsh, D C Boon, D M Jones, S R Waugh, G R J Matthews, I A Healy, M L Hughes, T M Alderman, S A Reid, G G Boucher).

ENGLAND (from G A Gooch (captain), M A Atherton, M L Lamb, R C Small, D J Gower, A Stewart, R C Russell, G C Small, P C R Tufnell, S E Hemmings, D E Malcolm, P A J DeFreitas).

John Woodcock, page 28

Lewis told to aim for April start

A SPECIALIST has told the England all-rounder, Chris Lewis, that he should be fit for the start of the new season in April.

The Leicestershire player, aged 22, returned home from the tour of Australia following the discovery that he had a stress fracture in his back.

"The news was optimistic. He confirmed that with two or three months of rest I should be fine for the start of the new season," Lewis said.

Board lifts Warren's suspension

By SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT

THE suspension of the licences of Frank Warren was lifted by the British Boxing Board of Control yesterday but the dispute over money Warren allegedly owes Tom Collins, the European lightweight champion, could go on in the courts.

The board, which had imposed the ban because it claimed Warren had not paid \$20,000 to Collins, said it had decided to lift the suspension after the promoter "lodged" the money with the board.

John Morris, the secretary of the board, said: "We wrote Frank Warren a number of reminders telling him that if he did not comply by January 1 we would take action. Now that the money is lodged with the board we have lifted the suspension."

But Warren said that though he had authorised the board to deduct the money from a £13,000 bond lodged with the board, he was now taking legal steps.

The promoter's solicitors have written to the board saying that the deduction of the money "in no way affects his intention to commence proceedings against the board."

"I had had to pay the money to get my licence back and save my show," Warren said. He has an International Boxing Federation light-welterweight bout between Julio Cesar Chavez, of Mexico, and Santos Cardona, of the United States, at the London Arena on February 2.

BRM to return to the track

By STEPHEN SLATER

BRM, one of the most famous marques in British motor racing, is set to return to the sport after a 14-year absence, it was announced at the opening of the Auto Sports International Show in Birmingham yesterday.

Founded in 1947, BRM was one of the front-running teams in grand prix racing throughout the 1950s and 1960s, but has been dormant since 1977. Later this year the company, still owned by the Owen family, will return to the track with two all-new, V-12 engine sports cars. One model, the P351, is being designed to compete in the world sports car championship, while the second, the supercharged P401, is destined to become

one of the world's fastest road cars.

John Mangoletsi, who is heading BRM's technical and design operation at Congleton, in Cheshire, said: "Sports car racing is today far more appropriate for a car manufacturer than grand prix racing. We are looking to passing on the benefits of our racing programme — straight through to the road car project."

British honours at the auto sports show are also being upheld on the driving front. The grand prix drivers, Nigel Mansell OBE and Derek Warwick announced that they will be combining forces to launch Warwick's younger brother,

Paul, into the highest echelons of the sport.

Paul Warwick is aiming to become the first Briton to win the British Formula 3000 Championship at the wheel of a 460 bhp Reynard-Cosworth car, prepared by Nigel's team, Mansell Madgwick Motorsport, who last year won the championship with the Portuguese driver, Pedro Chaves.

Paul, aged 20, has already proved a champion in lesser formulae and gained the full approval of Mansell, who said: "It's very hard work, but Paul has already proved that he has what it takes to be a winner. We're looking forward to him giving the team a double success."

Charlton belies his years

By STEVE ACTESON

THE evergreen Eddie Charlton, aged 61 but still ranked 31st in the snooker world, yesterday defeated the world No. 3, John Parrott, of Liverpool, 5-1 in the most surprising result so far of the Mercantile Credit Classic at Bournemouth.

Charlton mixed breaks of 35, 62, 42 and 40 with some superb safety play to establish a 4-0 lead and although Parrott stole the fifth frame with a clearance of 31, his demise was not long in coming.

Charlton, already guaranteed £4,500 for his place in the last 16, needs the money. His wife, Robyn, is expecting their second son in March and he also has three children and six grandchildren from his first marriage.

Having outlasted such contemporaries as Ray Reardon and Fred Davis, Charlton is still passionately in love with the game.

He next plays Ken Doherty, of Ireland, who beat fellow first season professional, Jason Prince, 5-3. Alan McManus, a rookie but a UK championship semi-finalist, also reached the fifth round.

RESULTS: Fourth round, J. Charlton (Eng) 5-1 J. Parrott (Liv); J. Campbell (Aus) 5-0 M. Hallen (Eng) 5-1 J. West (Eng); 5-0; S. Davis (Eng) 5-0 G. Wilson (Wales); 5-0; E. Charlton (Wales) 5-0 J. Parrott (Eng); 5-1; E. Lawler (Eng) 5-0 S. Newbury (Wales); 5-2; A. McManus (Scot) 5-0 A. Robb (Aus); 5-0; W. Jones (Wales) 5-0 J. Chappell (Wales); 5-3; K. Doherty (Eng) 5-1 J. Prince (N.Ir.); 5-3; S. Westhead (Wales) 5-0 J. Hurrey (Scot); 5-0; J. Jones (Eng); 5-2; D. O'Kane (NZ) 5-0 S. Longworth (Eng); 5-3; A. Drago (Malta) 5-0 J. Goss (Wales); 5-1; R. Chappell (Can) 5-1 J. Smith (Eng); 5-1; S. Davis (Eng) 5-0 K. Chivers (Eng); 5-1; M. Bennett (Wales) 5-0 T. Gattina (Wales); 5-2; D. Roe (Eng) 5-1 A. Moss (Eng); 5-4; M. Clark (Eng) 5-1 J. Wych (Can); 5-2.

Fears put end to county tie

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE confused state, and status, of the county championship was never better illustrated than yesterday when it was announced that North Midlands had withdrawn from their rearranged fixture with Lancashire at Orrell tomorrow. They did so fearing a mismatch, and thereby condemned themselves to second division rugby next season.

North Midlands, beaten 37-0 by Warwickshire and 57-4 by Yorkshire, took the decision when they heard that Lancashire had selected the entire Orrell pack, most of whom were involved in divisional rugby in December when the original fixture

should have been played.

"We couldn't take the risk of any of our players being injured in such a mismatch," Peter Grace, the chairman of selectors, said. "The selection of the Lancashire team was not, in our opinion, in the spirit of the game and that is why we pulled out."

There is nothing in the regulations to prevent Lancashire, the 1990 champions, choosing whichever players were available to them to avoid relegation. They were also offering assistance to the county's best club, Orrell, by giving the players a game together before the league match with Harlequins on January 12 and they have

been sadly affected themselves by divisional calls.

Bill Bishop, chairman of the Rugby Football Union's competitions sub-committee, said the regulations would be examined to avoid a repeat.

● Brotherly love will keep the Rosslyn Park captain, Richard Moon, on the sidelines at Llanelli tomorrow. Richard and his younger brother Rupert, the Llanelli scrum-half, have a family rule that they will never play against each other.

Ian Campbell-Lamerton replaces Simon Dear, the Park lock who is training with the England squad in Lanzarote.

Childerley leads British quest for gold

By BARRY PICKTHALL

THE British Olympic yachting coaches are planning for a bumper haul of medals at next year's Games in Barcelona.

"We are well ahead on fitness and mental preparation and that told at the Palamos Christmas regatta, where our sailors gained first, second and third placings," Rod Carr, the chief Olympic coach, said at the London Boat Show yesterday.

His optimism has helped win the backing of PowerGen, the newly privatised electricity company which announced yesterday that it is to chip in half the £40,000 budget for Stuart Childerley's campaign to win gold in the Finn

single-hander class.

The 24-year-old from Southampton was a recipient of a £5,000 Times/Minet Supreme Award after winning the pre-Olympic regatta in Korea four years ago, but then finished a disappointing fourth when it came to the all-important medal count a year later. "I peaked too early then, but hope that by devoting 18 months, and not three and a half years, I will peak at the right time this time," he said.

Using the same dinghy that helped him to win the European championship four years ago, Childerley finished a promising second to the present European champion, Stig Westergaard, of Denmark,

at Palamos last week after a two-year break.

With the support of PowerGen, together with secondary sponsorship from Henri-Lloyd, Childerley now embarks on a full-time programme taking in pre-Olympic regattas at Genoa, Anzio and Palma before travelling to Kingston, Canada, for the world championship in September.

Rod Carr's other Olympic medal hopes include the British Olympic class sailboard world champion, Penny Way, who continued her winning ways at Palamos with a clean sweep of victories, the men's champion, Barrie Edgington, and the former 470 world

champion, Nigel Buckley and Peter Newlands.

Another to impress is Matthew Wemms, aged 19, the windsurfer who came through with a second and a sixth on the final day to finish third at Palamos despite ripping his hands in training.

A replacement for Jester, the famous 26ft Folkboat sailed by Lt Col Blondie Haslar in the first Observer single-handed transatlantic back in 1960, which was lost in the 1988 race during her fourteenth crossing, is to be built by the Alderburgh boatyard in Suffolk. The new boat will compete in next year's transatlantic race.

Seles and Prpic brush United States aside

PERTH (AP) — Monica Seles and Goran Prpic won singles matches yesterday to lift Yugoslavia to victory over the United States, the No. 1 seeds, in the final of the Hopman Cup team tennis championship at the Burswood Superdome.

Seles crushed Zina Garrison, 6-1, 6-1 in the women's singles, and Prpic rallied to defeat David Wheaton, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 in the men's singles to give Yugoslavia an unbeatable 2-0 lead and leave the mixed doubles meaningless.

Seles, the world No. 2, out-

played Garrison, who was beaten in the Wimbledon final last year, in the opening singles, which took just 65 minutes and was unbeaten in singles action during the tournament.

She hit the ball deep from the baseline and forced a succession of errors from the American, who struggled with volleys and overhead shots.

Prpic trailed 6-4, 3-1 against the power-serving Wheaton, but gradually wore down his opponent. He served ten aces and was successful with 70 per cent of his first serves.



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